

University of Technology, Jamaica

Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

Principles and Guidelines

Table of Contents

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY: Principles and Guidelines

Section Title	Page
1. GENERAL OVERVIEW.....	4
1.1. Background	4
1.2. Definition of Distance Education	4
1.3. Statement of Purpose	4
1.4. General Principles	4
1.5. The UTech Approach to Distance Education	5
1.5.1. Distance Education Modalities	6
1.5.2. Implementation Plan	6
1.6. Specific Quality Indicators	6
1.7. Institutional Context	7
1.8. Institutional Drivers/Motives	8
2. DISTANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING PLAN.....	9
2.1. Proposed learning outcomes	9
2.2. Alternative Testing and Assessment.....	9
2.3. Redo Policy	10
2.4. Definition of Contact Credit Hours and Interaction Standards	10
2.5. Needs and Obligations of Distance Learners.....	11
2.5.1. Responsibilities of Faculty Members.....	11
2.5.2. Responsibilities of Distance Learners	12
2.6. Institutional Requirements	12
2.7. Best Practices.....	13
3. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.....	13
3.1. Distance Learning Budget and Fees.....	13
3.2. Tuition Rate for Distance Learners	14
3.3. Benefits to Distance Learners.....	14
3.4. Financial Aid.....	14
3.5. Administrative Costs.....	15
3.6. Staffing	15
4. TECHNOLOGY ACCESS & USE – PRIVACY & SECURITY.....	15
4.1. Selection Criteria for Mode/Threshold Application	15
4.2. Infrastructure	16

4.3.	Hardware and Software Decisions	16
4.4.	Set Up Concerns/Connectivity	16
4.5.	Access	16
4.5.1.	Library	17
4.5.2.	Learning Management System	17
4.6.	System Reliability	17
4.7.	Backup/Maintenance/Contingency Plan.....	17
4.8.	Use of ICT to Enhance Teaching, Learning, Research and Services	17
4.9.	Multimedia Support – Help Desk	18
5.	QUALITY ASSURANCE – ACCREDITATION &	18
	PROGRAMME EVALUATION.....	18
5.1.	Definition of Standards	18
5.2.	Course Integrity	20
5.3.	Class Monitoring	20
5.4.	Student/Course Evaluation	21
5.5.	Test Proctoring	21
5.6.	Accreditation/ UCJ Role.....	21
5.7.	Transferability	21
6.	CURRICULUM – LEARNING RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT,.....	22
	MATERIAL PRODUCTION & DELIVERY	22
6.1.	Criteria for Selecting Modules/Courses.....	22
6.2.	Curriculum/Course Approval.....	22
6.3.	Calendar/Class Size	23
6.4.	Module/Course/Degree availability	24
6.5.	Materials Delivery	24
6.6.	Printing Facilities	24
7.	STAFF COMPENSATION AND RECOGNITION	24
7.1.	Compensation and Workload / Release Time/ Innovation and Development Incentives 24	
7.2.	Existing union contracts.....	25
7.3.	Ownership, Promotion/Tenure	25
8.	STUDENT RECRUITMENT/ADMISSION & GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	26
8.1.	Recruiting/Marketing.....	26
8.2.	Admission/Registration	27
8.3.	Prior Learning Assessment.....	27
8.4.	Graduation Requirements.....	27

9. LIBRARY, LABORATORY AND OTHER RESOURCES	28
9.1. Virtual Library Resources	28
9.2. Lab Resources	28
9.3. Acquisition of Other Resources	29
10. STUDENT SUPPORT	29
10.1. Virtual Support – Distance Learners	29
10.2. Orientation, Response Time	30
10.3. Feedback/Handling Complaints	30
11. STUDENTS RECORDS	31
11.1. Transcripts.....	31
12. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT	31
12.1. Faculty Training	31
12.2. Faculty Support	32
12.3. Faculty Evaluation	33
12.4. Professional Development Programme	34
13. ALLIANCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATIVE OFFERINGS.....	34
13.1. Geographic Coverage.....	34
13.2. Local versus Collaborative Tuition	35
13.3. Outreach and Franchise Programmes	35
14. COMMUNICATION AND WORKFLOW	35
14.1. Mapping Internal Processes/Approval Levels/Timelines	35
14.2. Iterative Cycle for Instructional Design.....	36
14.3. Implementation and Quality Monitoring.....	36
15. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND COPYRIGHT.....	36
15.1. Intellectual Property	36
15.2. Informed Consent	37
GLOSSARY	38
APPENDIX 1	41
APPENDIX 2.....	43
APPENDIX 3.....	45
APPENDIX 4.....	46

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1. Background

The University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech) is committed to promotion of lifelong learning, personal development and service to community. A central aspect of its vision, as articulated in the Strategic Plan (2006-2010), is the provision of innovative and expanded access to learning, through professionally-driven and leading-edge programmes, facilitated by technically competent staff.

Distance Education is regarded as one of the main vehicles for increasing open and flexible access to high quality, innovative and competitive life-long learning opportunities. Constraints of time and distance are mitigated through the provision of learning experiences at times that are convenient to both instructors and students, and access to programmes is opened to a greater number of students who are separated by geographical distance.

1.2. Definition of Distance Education

Distance Education is defined as a formal learning activity which occurs when students and instructor are separated by geographic distance or by time, often supported by communications technology such as television, videotape, computers, Internet, or mail.¹

When the term *distance education courses/modules* is used in this *Policy and Guidelines* document, it refers primarily to credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses/modules developed for continuing education, professional development and academic qualification, and facilitated by technology-mediated delivery. The *Policy and Guidelines* also applies to those traditional face-to-face courses that are incorporating elements of distance education.

1.3. Statement of Purpose

While UTech recognizes the advantages of providing learning opportunities to students that are not limited by time, place or method of delivery, it is essential that alternative approaches to instruction adhere to the same high quality standards that exist for traditional face-to-face instruction. In an effort to meet and ensure that these same standards exist in distance education at the University, this document serves the following purposes:

- i) To communicate quality standards for the delivery and assessment of distance education at University of Technology, Jamaica, and
- ii) To provide a practical guide for developing and implementing distance education.

1.4. General Principles

¹ From *Glossary of Terms for Higher Education and Distance Learning*, Indiana College Network Web Site, <http://www.icn.org/resources/glossary.html>.

The following general principles undergird distance education at UTech.

- Courses/modules will be consistent with the role, mission and academic standards of UTech.
- The design and delivery of courses/modules will adhere to national and international legal and regulatory requirements, including copyright laws and provision of appropriate services for persons with disabilities. Specific provisions of relevant policies of UTech will also apply.²
- Courses/modules will be carefully planned to meet the needs of students within unique learning contexts and environments, at the highest quality standards, based on international best practices.
- Students shall have adequate access to library, student services, academic and technical support, and any other administrative services required for successful completion of distance learning programmes and courses/modules.
- Courses/modules shall provide opportunity for regular, personal and substantial interactions among students and between Faculty and students;
- UTech shall offer appropriate training and support services to Faculty and other academic staff involved in the delivery of Distance Education courses/modules and programmes.
- Distance Learning shall be offered by UTech as a means of increasing access to educational programmes and of promoting open and continuing education for professional and personal development.³

1.5. The UTech Approach to Distance Education

At UTech, distance education delivery will incorporate blended learning with the combination of two or more learning environments - usually face-to-face experiences with other modes of technology-mediated delivery of learning materials - in response to learner needs.⁴

The UTech strategy also involves an integrated systems approach to distance education, through the collaboration of all major departments/units of the University, which provide administrative, technical and academic support for the core business of teaching and learning.

² See draft *Policy and Procedures for Students with Disabilities* (Division of Student Services and Registry).

³ The term *open* as used here refers primarily to flexibility of access, with less rigorous entry requirements, including credentials and entrance examinations. (Adapted from definition provided by Commonwealth of Learning at <http://www.col.org>) The provision for prior learning assessment by UTech is an important feature of open access in its broadest interpretation.

⁴ B. Mullinix et al, *Balancing the Learning Equation: Exploring Effective Mixtures of Technology, Teaching and Learning*, The Technology Source, September/October 2003. <http://ts.mivu.org>

1.5.1. Distance Education Modalities

The range of distance education modes may include the use of the internet, interactive television, digital video disks (DVDs), compact disk with read-only memory (CD-ROMs), videotapes, multi-media packages, computer-based instruction, audio conferencing and printed media.

Of special significance for UTech will be the increasing emphasis on incorporating Internet-based or online learning modes, where appropriate. The current thrust towards the adoption of an Online Learning Management System (LMS) to undergird the UTech Distance Learning Initiative is being driven by advances in Information Communication Technologies.

1.5.2. Implementation Plan

At UTech, the strategic approach is being adopted in the following phases towards the wide scale implementation of distance education as a totally integrated system within the institution:

Phase 1 - 2006 -2007 – The focus was on the preliminary readiness of UTech’s personnel, systems and processes, and the acquisition of equipment and resource tools for online learning.

Phase 2 – 2007-2008 – The focus was on the pilot testing of personnel, systems and processes through the delivery of externally-funded projects, and the building of technical infrastructure through external sponsorship.

Phase 3 – 2008-2009 – This phase focuses on policy formulation, training and development of academic, administrative and technical staff, as well as a modest incorporation of elements of online learning in select units/modules/courses of study.

Phase 4 – 2009-2010 – There will be an official launch of the UTech-Online learning portal with dedicated institutional funding and consolidation of resources to support the delivery of courses of study at a distance via blended learning modes.

Phase 5 – 2010-2015 – There will be the rapid expansion of flexible learning options with the pertinent support systems for the establishment of UTech as a Centre of Excellence in Distance Education throughout Jamaica and the Caribbean.

1.6. Specific Quality Indicators

The specific quality indicators for distance education are based on *The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*⁵, which can also be applied, in part, to graduate education. These indicators are determined by the proven value of providing opportunities for active learning, encouraging cooperation and interaction among students, increasing student responsibility, sharing expectations with students, and respecting and responding to the different preferences and circumstances of students. These specific quality indicators are:

- Students that are highly motivated and involved in learning activities, as a result of regular contact with instructors;

⁵ By Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson - From The American Association for Higher Education Bulletin, March 1987

- Teamwork among students characterized by a high level of cooperation and reciprocity, because of engagement with learning activities that provide opportunities for productive interactions;
- Students who become active learners through frequent engagement with learning activities that encourage them to relate what they learn to their own experiences;
- Students who are provided with regular and appropriate feedback on their current level of knowledge and competence as well as suggestions for improvement.
- Students who manage their time effectively, guided by realistic timelines and adequate pacing of courses/modules;
- Students who can clearly identify the expectations of tutors and are motivated to meet high expectations and
- Successful students who regularly participate in activities that facilitate the expression of different learning styles and talents.

In addition to these quality indicators, all courses with online elements (blended or fully online), will maintain at a minimum the number of hours for time on task online to be equivalent to the number of contact hours per week required for traditional face-to-face sessions.

1.7. Institutional Context

- All distance education courses/modules offered must be consistent with the role and mission of UTech and integrated into the University's broader strategies and operational plans.
- The Office of Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning (CEODL) has the primary responsibility for developing the distance learning capability of UTech, in pursuit of the broader strategic goal of providing flexible delivery formats and increasing access to learning opportunities for diverse learners. To this end, CEODL has oversight of the design, development and delivery of distance education, as part of the flexible learning and non-traditional offerings of UTech. The overall mandate of CEODL is to coordinate the delivery of credit and non-credit continuing education and professional programmes to expand the national and regional reach of the University, especially to non-traditional learners.
- In order to ensure consistency in adherence to the highest standards, the Office of Curriculum Development and Evaluation (OCDE) is charged with the responsibility of monitoring curriculum development and quality assurance of the University's academic programmes, including their external accreditation. All credit-bearing distance education programmes are therefore reviewed and approved through the OCDE, in consultation with CEODL. The non-credit bearing distance education programmes will also reflect UTech standards, with provision for the award of continuing education units or professional development units, through CEODL in consultation with OCDE.

Faculty Deans and Heads of School are expected to drive the development of new distance learning initiatives and increasing access to flexible learning. The Faculties are

expected to collaborate with other UTech central units to make available resources to support the development of the requisite distance teaching and learning resources, with particular attention to discipline-specific circumstances.

- The technical and physical facilities to support distance education shall be provided by UTech's campus infrastructure and monitored by a cross-functional workgroup of operational managers and other stakeholders, with oversight by the CEODL Office.
- All distance education courses/modules shall be developed and designed within a coherent technical framework, supported by the use of templates recommended by CEODL, and made accessible through the UTech Online Learning Management System, as appropriate.

Distance education in UTech is to be undertaken on a collaborative basis with development and delivery of courses/modules carried out by Faculties, CEODL, OCDE and the Learning Technologies Support Unit (LTSU), with deployment of the required mix of diverse planning, implementation and evaluation skills.

1.8. Institutional Drivers/Motives

The main institutional drivers that shall inform distance education at UTech are as follows. :

- The volume of distance/off-campus learning activities should be increased, to alleviate the constraint of limited physical space on campus;
- The quality of teaching and learning should be improved;
- Access to under-represented groups of students should be widened;
- There should be greater access to or entry into international student markets;
- Collaboration with other institutions should be promoted to share knowledge, resources and forge partnerships, as appropriate to strategic goals of UTech
- UTech should increase its competitive advantage in offering services to students.

Other motives for promotion of distance education include:

- provision of flexible learning opportunities for students with special needs;
- maximizing the use of specialized expertise of Faculty, adjunct Faculty and staff;
- use of distance education to model the innovative and collaborative use of instructional technology and
- increasing enrollment by offering courses that effectively responds to the instructional needs of prospective students.

2. DISTANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING PLAN

2.1. Proposed learning outcomes

Learner outcomes shall be based on the parameters identified in the Learning and Teaching Policy (LTP) of UTech). These parameters include the following:

- The centrality of the instructional event (See Paragraph 3.3 of LTP)
- The need for use of measurable learning outcomes; (See Paragraph 3.3. of LTP)
- The identification of learning outcomes that span the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain levels, at higher order domain levels; (See Paragraph 3.3 of LTP)
- The adoption of learning situations that encourage collaborative approaches (See Paragraph 3.4 of LTP).

To this end, distance education courses/modules shall promote the achievement of proposed learning outcomes through careful selection of learning design, including learning activities and media or delivery system.

Intended learning outcomes shall be reviewed regularly to ensure their clarity, utility and appropriateness for the learners.

2.2. Alternative Testing and Assessment

Assessment of student achievement is guided by parameters outlined in the Learning and Teaching Policy of UTech which highlights the importance of assessment that is guided by a clear statement of outcomes, is congruent with intended learning and provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate what they have learnt. (See Paragraph 3.5 of LTP)

For distance education, it is important that careful analysis of the profile of the target student population inform the building of an effective distance learning course. Learner Profile Instruments developed by CEODL, in collaboration with LTSU and OCDE, shall reflect such factors as demographics, previous experience and coursework, technological skill and access, learning preferences, and possible special needs.

All distance education activities shall be designed with an assessment plan for the effectiveness and sustainability of the assessment process. Course outcome assessment activities shall be integrated components of the assessment plan.

A systematic approach to assessment shall be adopted with techniques for measuring prior learning and intended outcomes, and with provisions for documenting what learners know and what they can do as a result of learning experiences.

Where assessment of prior learning, with regard to online readiness and technical capability, indicates limited or marginal state of readiness, appropriate steps shall be taken to provide preparatory training to such students for effective participation in online learning activities.

Students shall be provided with systematic, regular, timely and useful feedback throughout the process for assessment of outcomes.

2.3. Redo Policy

All distance education students shall be subject to the provisions regarding re-do examination policies and procedures as outlined in the relevant section of the Student Handbook. A student who fails a module must re-do the module. The student is consequently required to register for the module, attend classes, complete all coursework assignments and sit the end-of-module final examination.

2.4. Definition of Contact Credit Hours and Interaction Standards

Academic Credit will be awarded on the basis of course content, course competence, extent of student time on task and Faculty-student contact, in accordance with UTech standards as approved by the University Council of Jamaica.

UTech requires fifteen contact hours for each course credit. A three-credit course would therefore require a total of forty-five contact hours, with at least three contact hours per week over the typical fifteen-week semester.

Contact hours in compressed video courses/modules or satellite courses/modules, where student-instructor meetings are in a synchronous mode, shall be recorded in the same manner as for traditional face-to-face sessions. However, asynchronous learning, such as Internet-based courses/modules, is more difficult to monitor and maintain contact hours. For this reason, the definition of contact hours in asynchronous learning environments will be interpreted as the equivalent in the minimum number of hours designated for 'time on task'.

The following guidelines shall be used at University of Technology, Jamaica to define and document time spent on learning in asynchronous learning environments:

The course syllabus shall clearly document that the course covers the same amount of material that would normally be expected if the class were a traditional classroom-based course. Clear documentation includes the course objectives covered, the course outline of topics covered, and the stated expectations for readings, projects, and other assignments. The Curriculum Committee of each Faculty shall periodically review such syllabi and provide feedback to the Faculty on the appropriate scope and breadth of the course.

When planning and developing a distance education course, instructors shall be required to estimate the minimum time that a typical student will take to access and work with primary learning materials. This proposed minimum 'time on task' shall be equivalent to the number of contact hours normally expected in traditional formats, and should be documented in course planning materials. Hours for completing homework assignments, working on projects, studying for examinations, etc., shall be considered outside the expectation for contact hours.

Each instructor must keep an "attendance record" for each distance learning class. Attendance in an asynchronous online learning environment must be defined in the syllabus and may be

numerically measured by the number of logins (generally available as a course statistics option in most courseware), degree of participation in regularly scheduled online discussions, chat sessions, or by timely submission of assignments.⁶

2.5. Needs and Obligations of Distance Learners

Many distance students select courses/modules to alleviate the constraints of conflicting work schedules, geographic isolation, and other unique challenges. Students shall therefore benefit from assignments that allow them greater control over the time and pace of their learning, than in the traditional learning environment.

Since the ability of students to succeed in a distance education class depends on their understanding of the class structure and technology, all participants shall be informed about the skills and technological competencies needed for particular distance education courses, in order to afford them the opportunity to realistically assess their capability to succeed in the course.

2.5.1. Responsibilities of Faculty Members

In this regard, UTech shall adopt two basic approaches to ensure that students enrolled in distance education courses/modules are familiar with the knowledge and equipment necessary to be successful in the course. The respective Faculty shall provide the required information to prospective students in the Course Outline and students shall be encouraged to read this document before enrolling in a distance education class.

Faculty members shall also assess the student's capability before the start of the course or during the course. Assessment can be accomplished by discussing the requirements with the student and/or creating an assignment that requires the student to demonstrate mastery of the skills required for successful participation in the course. (See Appendix 1 for *Online Readiness Questionnaire*)

If, during the assessment process, an instructor determines that a student does not have the minimum capability to succeed in the course, the instructor may advise the student to drop the course. The instructor shall keep documentation of the assessment process and communication with students who do not possess the necessary knowledge and/or equipment to be successful in the course.

Students and instructors need to examine and be familiar with all of UTech's current policy regarding Information Technology Management (see http://intrautech/Accounts/IM_Policies_and_Procedures.pdf) which addresses issues relevant to distance education design, delivery, communication, and the use of UTech's computer resources. Students should also be advised of the guidelines regarding the use of UTech's computing equipment or networks to prevent misuse.

⁶ Based on Southeastern Louisiana University, Standards for Quality Distance Education, Distance Education: Definition and Principles Retrieved: February 18, 2008 from <http://www2.selu.edu/documents/policies/distedustandards.pdf>

Faculty shall ensure that, in accordance with the provisions outlined in the *Policies Governing the Implementation of Academic Advisement* (2003/A/04/45(B)), distance education students also receive individual and structured support for academic decisions related to programmes, options, electives and their academic progress.

2.5.2. Responsibilities of Distance Learners

On their part, students shall be prepared to take readiness tests or any assignment designed for them to demonstrate mastery of the basic computer competencies required for effective participation in courses of study or modules.

Students should sign the requisite informed consent forms after fully apprising themselves of the requirements, before participating in online courses. (See Section 15.2 of this document for details.)

Students who register for online courses are required to have access to the Internet and to computers that meet specifications indicated in the Course Outline.

Students shall also be encouraged to explore resources provided in the online Resource Centre available in the LMS, in order to understand the requirements of online learning and determine if their learning style and computer skills are appropriate for online learning.

2.6. Institutional Requirements

Issues related to the facilities, staffing, equipment, and other resources essential to the viability and effectiveness of the delivery of distance education will be informed by UTech's long range planning, budgeting, and policy development processes.

Within the context of an evolving UTech model of an integrated systems approach to distance education, the requisite administrative, technical and academic support services are provided through the collaboration of different departments of the University.

Administrative support for registration, enrolment, academic records and financial administration is provided by the Registrar Office (Academic Services Department - Admissions Office and Student Records Office) and the Division of Finance, Business and ICT Services.

Resources for technical support, including access to the Moodle - Online Learning Management System and multi-media support, may be provided through the Technology and Information Management Department (with the offices of Enterprise Application Services (EAS), Network Operations Systems Services [NOSS] and Learning Technologies Support Unit [LTSU]).

Academic support for course design, delivery and assessment rests with the relevant Faculty. Provision of information resources (print and electronic) is the main responsibility of the Calvin McKain Library. The minimum specifications for students and Faculties to operate in particular distance learning modes will be provided in the selected course proposal documents.

Overall monitoring of standards in design and delivery of courses/modules lies within the remit of OCDE. (See Section 5 on Quality Assurance) Responsibility for overall coordination of

distance education as well as support in the design of courses/modules is part of the mandate of CEODL.

2.7. Best Practices

Every attempt shall be made to develop the Distance Teaching and Learning Plans based on current best practices that model the seven principles outlined under *Section – Specific Quality Indicators*.

Instructional strategies shall engage students in activities that provide opportunities for application of learning, such as case studies, journal writing, role playing and problem-solving, as well as class discussions that encourage active learning and interaction with course content.

CEODL shall promote practices of flexibility in the design of assignments and use of multiple means of content delivery and other practices, which respond to students' individual learning preferences, meet the special needs of disabled students and promote active learning. All distance education courses/modules should encourage, where applicable, course experiences such as cooperative learning activities; field experiences; public debates; activities requiring analysis, synthesis and evaluation, with application to real-life situations; threaded discussions and interactive chat rooms.

In order to mitigate the fairly 'isolating' nature of distance learning, CEODL shall encourage the establishment of 'learning communities' that engage in productive communication and collaboration. A variety of communications channels, such as e-mail, telephone, video, discussion forums and online chats shall be adopted to increase student-to-teacher and student-to-student interaction.

3. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

3.1. Distance Learning Budget and Fees

The Distance Education Program at UTech is financed through the same budgeting process used for other university programmes, reflecting a central and devolved budgeting process. The University will consider all associated long term financial implications of its distance learning strategy in order to ensure that it can maintain and enhance delivery. Consistency across the university is fostered by having an established set of technologies and tools, which are centrally funded, supported and made available to staff and students.

The resources to support distance learning planning and oversight are primarily channeled through the central budget for CEODL as well as through the operational budgets of individual Faculties, and other central support offices such as the LTSU, NOSS, EAS, OCDE, Library and Student Services. Each cost centre will indicate the proportional contribution of its services to the development and delivery process, to facilitate the disaggregation of costs.

There will be a special central fund made available to support distance teaching and learning innovations, research and development, especially in the areas of testing new technologies for

distance learning. The University will also focus on the most efficient way of producing distance learning resources (including the sharing of reusable objects)

Each distance learning activity will undergo rigorous feasibility and risk assessment processes. Income generated by the offering of distance learning courses to off campus students will provide surplus for investments in infrastructure and support services required for the continuous improvement and expansion of distance education. The business model will also calculate the cost-savings for on-campus activities which focus on the increasing adoption of blended learning to facilitate the release of classroom space and to increase the options for flexible access by on-campus students.

3.2. Tuition Rate for Distance Learners

Distance learning students in traditional credit courses may be charged at the same tuition rate as on-campus students. However, special consideration will be given to non-campus students who will not be utilizing some of the traditional services incorporated in the current UTech fees, with careful analysis of the technological resources required to support distance delivery.

Non-credit distance education courses/modules are offered with tuition and fees that cover direct instructional costs, and indirect personnel fees and infrastructure costs. The direct costs include instructor replacement costs for any instruction provided as part of Faculty's workload; while the indirect costs will include administrative fees for support services offered by the pertinent UTech central units.

Distance education that is conducted on a cost-recovery basis is defined as an entrepreneurial activity. It includes credit or non-credit instruction for groups that are not normally served by UTech. Such courses/modules are demand-driven and managed on a project basis. Tuition and fees are determined by the willingness or ability of the market to bear direct and indirect costs of instruction and infrastructure.

3.3. Benefits to Distance Learners

Before the start of the course, registered students must complete a short Orientation Module for successful navigation of the selected learning management system and for effective participation in online learning.

Each student should receive a Distance Learner Handbook, outlining such issues as admissions, technical requirements, instructional requirements and expectations and library resources.

Each distance learner should have access to student support services required to support an online learning community, including an integrated help desk, tutorial support and access to electronic library resources.

3.4. Financial Aid

Eligibility requirements for financial aid are the same for Jamaican students in distance education as they are for traditional on-campus courses/modules. In order to qualify for financial

aid, students should be enrolled at UTech in a degree-seeking Programme and earning credit towards the degree. Students who are taking non-credit courses/modules and students who are not in a degree Programme are not eligible for financial aid. Other conditions will apply for overseas non-Jamaican students.

3.5. Administrative Costs

The administrative costs of distance education programmes are borne proportionally by the Faculties and the central UTech support units.

3.6. Staffing

Staffing provisions for distance education are directly connected to the scope of services required for effective distance learning. This implies that part-time or temporary personnel may be hired on a project basis to support distance education activities that generate income for the University.

Oversight of all design, development and delivery aspects of distance education is provided by CEODL. Curriculum design and course delivery, tutorial support and assessment lie within the academic remit of individual Faculties. Administrative and technical support is the responsibility of the UTech central units including CEODL, OCDE, LTSU, the Library and other Student Services departments. The functions performed by staff in support of distance education are therefore distributed throughout UTech. The specific roles played by each department or unit are as follows:

Academic support is provided by Faculty members, under the direction of the Dean of the Faculty or Adjunct Faculty contracted through the CEODL Office, and includes course design, development, delivery and student assessment. General guidance on curriculum development and quality assurance procedures is provided by the OCDE, while the Admissions Office in collaboration with EAS oversees the processing of admissions and the enrolment process.

Administrative and technical support requires the services of a network of departments and units, coordinated by CEODL. Remote access to electronic data bases and journals is provided by the Calvin McKain Library. Access to the LMS, including creation of Course Creator privileges, enrolment of students in the LMS, technical support for conducting online sessions and administration of the server for the LMS is the primary responsibility of the LTSU. Maintenance of hardware and software for the LMS server, including provision of the necessary bandwidth to facilitate online sessions is handled by NOSS.

4. TECHNOLOGY ACCESS & USE – PRIVACY & SECURITY

4.1. Selection Criteria for Mode/Threshold Application

UTech will promote low threshold application of information technology for teaching/learning, which is reliable, accessible, easy to learn, user-friendly and with low marginal costs. Examples of low threshold applications to minimize the risks of inadequate bandwidth and/or poor Internet connectivity could include CD ROMS and DVDs.

The main criteria in selecting mode/threshold applications are:

- accessibility – availability and flexibility for users;
- level of expenses incurred for delivery and support services;
- appropriateness of teaching/learning approach in terms of the volume of text and ease for incorporating multi-media resources to facilitate interactions that accommodate diverse learning styles;
- interactivity and user-friendliness – the extent to which the learner can interact with the technology;
- institutional structures and levels of support to facilitate learner success and
- the newness of the technology and its potential for sustainability.

4.2. Infrastructure

The extensive use of computing, internet-based and related technologies for teaching and learning, research, library automation and administration will require the provision of adequate computer power, file storage, and input/output facilities for use by staff and students.

The University will provide software and support in the form of applications software, access to data sets, documentation and advice for staff and students to use the services provided in the most efficient manner possible.

The University's policy is designed to optimise the utilisation of IS/IT resources, by providing computer access and related equipment on a 24-hour basis, where possible. (Chapter 2 – General Policy Framework, Paragraphs 2.27-2.29 of the UTech Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual)

4.3. Hardware and Software Decisions

Details on Information Technology Governance are provided in Chapter 3 of the UTech *Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual*.

4.4. Set Up Concerns/Connectivity

The LTSU, as the designated Administrator of UTech's Learning Management System, works in collaboration with NOSS to specify technology requirements for computers, internet connection, browsers and plug-ins for distance education.

4.5. Access

4.5.1. Library

In addition to meeting technological requirements, the Enterprise Application Services in collaboration with Admissions, enrolls and registers students who are issued special codes to access the Calvin McKain Library and its online resources. (See Section 9 also on ***Library, and Laboratory and Other Resources***)

4.5.2. Learning Management System

The LTSU has the overall responsibility for user management, site management and course management in relation to the online Learning Management System (LMS). All faculty and students who have been given access distance education courses via the LMS are usually provided with orientation and guidance by CEODL to ensure adequate levels of competencies and comfort as well as compliance with the UTech quality standards for teaching and learning.

Various means of registration are available to students in order to access the LMS, including: manual registration through LTSU; email self registration, which is restricted to the UTech domain; and authentication against an external database with the ISAS username, password and email field.

The current version of the LMS is 1.8. The decision to upgrade to newer versions of Moodle and to add new plug-ins is primarily guided by pedagogical concerns. These concerns include the need to provide a wide range of synchronous and asynchronous means of communication for promotion interaction at all levels.

4.6. System Reliability

The department of Network Operations Systems Services (NOSS) has the primary responsibility for providing controls system security, system availability and system process integrity for the technology and network infrastructure to support online learning LTSU has direct control over system reliability issues for the LMS.

4.7. Backup/Maintenance/Contingency Plan

NOSS has the primary responsibility to “incorporate appropriate and adequate mechanisms for data protection (backup/restore, data corruption, disaster recovery, virus protection) and data security (unauthorised access)”. (See Chapter 2 – General Policy Framework – Paragraph 2.21 of the *Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual*).

NOSS also has responsibility for maintenance of hardware, operating systems, systems software and applications as outlined in Chapter 5 – Operations Management – Paragraph 5.4 of the *Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual*)

4.8. Use of ICT to Enhance Teaching, Learning, Research and Services

The University's policy is to provide appropriate access to computing and IS/IT services for all designated members of the University community and to facilitate their acquisition of the skills required to exploit those services. (Chapter 2- General Policy Framework - Paragraph 2.22 of the Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual)

The University will promote the widespread use of technology in the educational process as part of its commitment to the provision of a high-quality learning experience. (Chapter 2- General Policy Framework - Paragraph 2.23 of the Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual)

The University will endeavor to make available appropriate computer facilities for research in keeping with its intention to promote research. (Chapter 2- General Policy Framework - Paragraph 2.24 of the Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual)

4.9. Multimedia Support – Help Desk

Through the adoption of an integrated approach to student support, NOSS, LTSU, EAS, CEODL and the Faculties provide a 24-hour Help Desk which refers all queries to the respective unit. NOSS provides general user support to the University, for all computer-mediated technologies, through a dedicated technical Help Desk, as outlined in Chapter 5 – Operations Management – Paragraph 5.5. of the *Information Management Policies and Procedures Manual*.

User support for any issues directly related to the selected Learning Management System is the responsibility of LTSU. All other quality issues related to the appropriate use of media for teaching and learning at a distance by faculties and students are usually directed through CEODL to the pertinent unit.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE – ACCREDITATION & PROGRAMME EVALUATION

5.1. Definition of Standards

All distance education courses/modules shall meet the same standards for objectives and substantive content, as required for a traditionally delivered course. All distance education courses should have learning outcomes that are appropriate to the degree or certificate to be granted, and should be held to the same rigorous standards as traditional on-campus degrees and certificates.

All modules that are primarily (that is, with >70% of module hours) mediated by the web at a distance, supported by the selected LMS and have the majority of content, interactions and assessments conducted online, are defined as ***Distance Education Modules***

The following terminology is used to identify modules that utilise distance education technology but are not classified as distance education:

Modules which extensively use the selected LMS (50-70% of sessions), supported by face-to-face sessions, and which integrate online assessment with face-to-face sessions, are identified as **Hybrid Online Modules**.

Modules which integrate the use of the selected LMS (30-50% of sessions) with face-to-face sessions, promote interaction online and make the selection of assessment modalities reflect the actual balance between online and face-to-face sessions, are identified as **Blended Modules**.

Modules which promote use of online tools and online interaction with the Instructor, explore the use of the LMS (20-30%% of sessions) to supplement face-to-face sessions and may include online components as part of formal assessment, are identified as **Web Enhanced Modules**

Modules which use the selected LMS (10-20% of sessions) primarily to distribute content and to supplement face-to-face sessions, and do not recognise online components in assessment, are identified as **Web Assisted Modules**.

Students should be advised, before registration, if any steps are taken to adapt or replace a module (based on face-to-face sessions) with components of distance education mediated by web-based tools. The syllabus for the course (distributed at the beginning of the semester) should designate which modules are to be adapted or replaced by distance education, and such courses should be reviewed and approved in advance by the departmental head, the OCDE and CEODL.

To ensure the quality of the distance education courses/modules offered, the OCDE and CEODL will monitor the development of new courses and all modifications to existing courses to ensure that all standards are maintained, in accordance with national and professional accrediting bodies. (See Paragraph 1 of the *Academic Quality Audit Policy*).

The University requires that each School and Department offering courses of study submit to an internal academic quality audit of its courses. (See Paragraph 2 of the *Academic Quality Audit Policy*).

Quality audits will include standards regarding:

- approval and re-approval processes;
- framework structure of courses of study and any changes over preceding two years;
- number, order and structure of modules contained in courses of study and any changes in preceding two years;
- academic and pedagogical qualifications and experience of instructional staff;
- qualifications and experience of administrative support staff;
- physical resources available to support courses;
- financial resources available to support courses;
- learning resources and instructional materials to support courses;
- evidence of acceptance of graduates in workplace and in graduate studies;
- retention rate for each course in preceding three years;
- relevance of respective courses to business and industry and
- response of graduates to their academic experience. (See Paragraph 2.4 of *Academic Quality Audit Policy* for details).

5.2. Course Integrity

The same policies concerning admissions requirements, scholastic standards, academic honesty, dropping and adding classes, repetition of courses, incomplete designations, withdrawal from a course or from the University, classification, grading, grievance procedures, credits, degree completion, and honors will apply to distance learning as they do for campus-based classes. (See websites for the for the Student Handbook and Guide for Online Learners <http://www.utechjamaica.edu.jm/CurrStudents/StudentHandbook.pdf> <http://utechonline.utech.edu.jm/mod/resource/view.php?inpopup=true&id=5794>)

The goals and objectives, and skills and competencies are the same for distance learning courses as for those offered on campus. The Faculty will apply the same standards for coursework and grading for both on-campus and distance learning courses.

Courses will comply with all related policies of UTech, including but not limited to:

- Academic Integrity
- Code of Ethics
- Student Code of Conduct
- Policy on Discrimination and Harassment
- Disability Compliance Statement

In accordance with the *General Principles* and *Specific Quality Indicators* outlined in this Document, all distance education courses are required to reflect good practices relating to:

- Properly defined learning goals and expectations;
- Effective and efficient course procedures (e.g. communication, assignment submission);
- Appropriate format and accessibility of material.
- Use of media that effectively engage different learning styles;
- Clearly defined student assessment policies and procedures;
- Systematic and effective course assessment;
- Establishment of a productive and dynamic learning community;
- Provision of instructions to students in the event of interruption of service;
- Inclusion in the course syllabus of well articulated learning goals, course expectations and requirements, and methods of communication with instructor and
- Provision of warning to students that the posting of abusive or insulting messages is prohibited.⁷

5.3. Class Monitoring

Distance education modules shall demonstrate that they provide the opportunity for substantial, personal, and regular interactions between Faculty and students (including online tutorial support) and among students.

⁷ Based on principles outlined in University of North Alabama, Distance Learning Policy Manual - <http://distance.una.edu/policies/>

5.4. Student/Course Evaluation

Distance learning courses are periodically reviewed as part of the general Academic Quality Audit conducted by OCDE to ensure high quality, consistency with the curriculum, currency of content and methodology and advancement of the student learning outcomes.

In addition, each Faculty is encouraged to conduct, in collaboration with CEODL, both formative and summative evaluations to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all distance education modules and update each module as needed.

Each distance education module is subject to the same requirements to assess the view of students regarding both the quality of instruction and the quality of the distance learning module as a whole, at the end of each semester. (See Appendix 2 for sample *Distance Education Student Course Evaluation Form*)

Participating Faculty members are to be surveyed periodically by the CEODL to assess their perceptions of the distance education modules, including personal effectiveness in use of the technology, appropriateness of different instructional styles for distance instruction, access to technical support, success of distance education modules as compared to modules, effectiveness of interactions with CEODL staff and suggestions for improvement. Results should then be analysed by CEODL and inform the wider institutional planning process for distance education. Details are provided in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Distance Education.

5.5. Test Proctoring

Assessment strategies for distance education courses will be approved by OCDE and CEODL with consideration of the extent to which distance education technologies are used in each module. Proctored tests can be used for any type of module, including blended, hybrid online and online modules.

5.6. Accreditation/ UCJ Role

The quality assurance body for Jamaican tertiary level institutions is the University Council of Jamaica. UTech has been granted accredited status and most courses of study have also received programmatic accreditation.

All distance learning or face-to-face courses that incorporate major elements of technology-mediated delivery must be submitted to the UCJ through the OCDE for approval.

The major elements considered for programmatic accreditation include quality of students, the quality of staff, the quality of the course of study (aims and philosophy, structure/content and practical work), assessment methods, resources and student welfare.

5.7. Transferability

Credits for academic courses earned in distance education modalities may apply to UTech degrees. Non-degree courses may also earn continuing education units or professional development units as recognized by professional bodies and international agencies. (See UTech policy on Continuing Education Units)

6. CURRICULUM – LEARNING RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MATERIAL PRODUCTION & DELIVERY

6.1. Criteria for Selecting Modules/Courses

Among the factors considered in determining courses to be offered through distance education are: student demand; availability of interested, qualified Faculty and staff members; accreditation issues; economic feasibility; course adaptability; accessibility of appropriate library services, learning resources, and/or laboratory equipment; timeliness of topic; and technological capabilities.⁸

6.2. Curriculum/Course Approval

Proposals for totally new credit-bearing courses of short duration, as well as new degree Programme proposals, progress through a similar curriculum development process as used for regular on-campus proposals.

Any significant change in the method of delivery for existing courses or modules shall be submitted as a **course change proposal**, to be reviewed by the OCDE in consultation with CEODL, for submission through a joint OCDE-CEODL Sub Committees and BUS to the Academic Board.

6.2.1. Major Changes of Face-to-Face Courses to Distance Learning Formats

Major changes to a **course**, including change to the mode of delivery, (as defined in the *Policy Guidelines on Major and Minor Changes to Courses and Module*, approved by the Board of Undergraduate Studies) should also go through the regular University approval process, outlined below:

- It is expected that Departments or Schools will identify the need for and guide the development of a **course concept**, which will be reviewed by **OCDE and CEODL**. A needs survey is designed and conducted at this point;
- **Proposals** for Courses of Study (degree or certificates) are then submitted to the **Faculty Curriculum Committee** which has responsibility for review of these proposals. Approved proposals are then sent to the **Faculty Board**, which in turn forwards a **Letter of Intent** to the **Academic Board**;

⁸ University of North Alabama, Distance Learning Policy Manual - from <http://distance.una.edu/policies/>

- Once the Academic Board has approved the Letter of Intent, the School or Department proceeds with the development of **the course of study proposal and modules** in consultation with its Advisory Committee, OCDE and CEODL.
- The **draft proposal** is presented to the Faculty Curriculum Committee, forwarded to the Faculty Board, which in turn forwards it to the **Curriculum Sub-Committee** for review and recommendation. If the proposal is recommended by the Curriculum Sub-Committee, the recommendation is reviewed by the Board of Undergraduate Studies and then sent to the Academic Board for approval.
- The School or Department finalises the **module syllabi** for review and acceptance by OCDE and CEODL, recruits staff and acquires resources in accordance with internally established timelines.

(See Appendix 3 for the flow chart *Major Changes - Proposed Steps for Online/Blended Learning Course of Study Development*)

Major changes to a module also require the approval of the Faculty Curriculum Committee, and submission to the OCDE, CEODL and BUS to the Academic Board.

6.2.2. Minor Changes of Face-to-Face Courses to Distance Learning Formats

When minor changes or adaptations of face-to-face courses/modules to distance learning formats are planned, proposed changes must first be submitted to the **Faculty Curriculum Committee** for review and approval and then sent for review and acceptance through the CEODL Sub Committee. (See *UTech Policy Guidelines on Major and Minor Changes to Courses and Modules*).

All proposals assessed by the CEODL Sub Committee in consultation with OCDE, will be examined on the bases of proposed instructional strategies, learner analysis, content analysis, resources to support the course, assessment strategies and the learning management system.

In order to develop high quality distance education courses and Programmes, Faculty must have sufficient time to develop the course and to receive training in the technology used to deliver the course. To this end, course development should begin at least three semesters for a full course of study and one semester for individual blended modules, immediately preceding the semester in which the course or module respectively will be delivered at a distance.

6.3. Calendar/Class Size

Some distance education courses are offered concurrently with the regular semester schedule utilized for on-campus classes at UTech, while other customized courses/modules are offered at times convenient to the targeted participants.

Class size should be determined by the availability of tutors to support learners. The

recommended ratio is twenty-five students to one tutor to facilitate individual support to learners and the monitoring of student progress to successful completion.

6.4. Module/Course/Degree availability

All distance education course offerings will be identified in the prospectus of the University. Students will be advised of any significant changes proposed to existing courses or modules, on an ongoing basis, before registration deadlines.

Once registered for an online module/course/degree, the distance learner will be provided with web access to the LMS – *UTechOnline* – which is located at <http://utechonline.utech.edu.jm/>

6.5. Materials Delivery

Hard copies of texts, videotapes, and CD and DVD ROMs will be made available at the specified distribution points (Faculty Office or Bookstore) on campus or will be hand-delivered to off-campus sites for participants. Where appropriate, access to electronic texts and web-based course sites will be facilitated through copyright permission of the publishers. All costs for material resources will be recovered by tuition fees or project sponsorship.

6.6. Printing Facilities

The production of all printed materials for distance education courses/modules will be coordinated by the Faculty, for degree or credit-bearing certificates and by CEODL, where the course or module is initiated by CEODL.

7. STAFF COMPENSATION AND RECOGNITION

7.1. Compensation and Workload / Release Time/ Innovation and Development Incentives

The wider UTech policies on Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright; Workload; Promotion and Tenure will provide the context for considerations of compensation for development, coordination and delivery of blended/online courses, sustained promotion of online involvement by Faculty members, and for recognition of their achievements in the area of distance learning.

The underlying assumption is that all issues should be well defined and understood, at the outset, before Faculty members become involved in the instructional design process for distance learning courses.

Compensation mechanisms will recognize development and delivery of distance education courses of study as part of Faculty workload, with provision of release time where required, or as overtime for which Faculty members will be compensated.

By way of an alternative approach, the delivery of distance education could be treated separately as part of the regular workload of Faculty members with release time where required or as overtime, while a special stipend could be paid for the development of support materials for a new online course of study, or for the adaptation of 70% of an existing face-to-face course to an online version.

Faculty members participating in distance education will be evaluated in the same manner as all other Faculty members in accordance with institutional policy.

These recommendations do not preclude the use of special incentives by the Faculty to encourage Faculty members to promote innovative approaches to distance education.

The Deputy President, Dean of the related Faculty and Head of Department or School should approve all compensation arrangements listed above. All projects in distance education, for which Faculty members are compensated, should be subject to the review and approval of the Faculty, the Deputy President and the Chief Financial Officer. All other forms of compensation, including travel, telecommunication and other expenses must be approved by the Faculty to which the instructor is assigned.

In teaching distance education courses, careful consideration should also be given to the existing policies of UTech regarding class size as well as to the impact of class size on student learning, workload and the economic viability of the course.

7.2. Existing union contracts

All provisions made for compensation of Faculty members and any incentives introduced to encourage Faculty involvement in distance education should be consistent with the principles articulated in the existing collective bargaining agreement of the University and with provisions of the current contract with the Union.

7.3. Ownership, Promotion/Tenure

The policy guideline for the ownership of distance learning materials or creative products will be subject to the University's policy on Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright. (See Section 15)

For practical purposes, the main operating principle is that where the University's resources are utilized for the production, development and delivery of distance learning materials, then the ownership belongs to the University. This would also incorporate

instances where development fees have been paid by the University to the parties involved.

Faculty members who are involved in distance education should investigate UTech's promotion and tenure practices to understand the impact of these activities on promotion and tenure opportunities.

In this regard, the following sections of Ordinance 1999/16 - Academic Staff Grading, Appointment, Promotion and Tenure are consistent with efforts to improve the teaching and learning process with the infusion of online elements:

The criteria for appointment, promotion, and tenure shall reflect the mission of UTech to promote learning by providing an internationally recognized learning environment that supports excellence in teaching, research, scholarship and service (Part 1.1. - Governing Principles); and

Superior teaching and academic advisement at all instructional levels are essential criteria in appointment and promotion. Every effort shall be made to recognize and emphasize excellence in teaching and advisement. The general test to be applied is that the academic staff member be engaged regularly and effectively in teaching and advisement activities of high quality and significance; (Paragraph 5.1.3 [b] – Teaching and Academic Advisement);

In addition, assessment of teaching will take into account teaching method, the quality of supervision and the **development and implementation of new and effective techniques of instruction** (Paragraph 5.1.3. [c] – Teaching and Academic Advisement).

Research and creative works related to the evolving and dynamic areas of distance education and online learning or which provide new models for integrating the advantages of face-to-face and online learning, should also be recognized under this policy (Paragraph 5.1.4.[a] – Assessment of Research/Scholarship/Creative Work/Professional Consultancy).

8. STUDENT RECRUITMENT/ADMISSION & GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

8.1. Recruiting/Marketing

Distance education students for credit and non-credit bearing continuing education and professional development courses are to be recruited in accordance with the general principles outlined in the Student Recruitment Policy of the University. These principles include policy statements regarding the commitment to provide sound and timely information, articulate student recruitment plans, develop recruitment strategies, accept qualified students without regard to gender, race, special needs, religion and national origin and provide competent staff to manage the recruitment process. Emphasis is placed on meeting student demands and interests for high quality, flexible programming delivered to eligible students and supported by

appropriate academic support services.

Recruitment for these distance education courses will take place through distribution of brochures, cooperative agreements with other institutions and organizations, fairs and expositions, course catalogues, public advertisements, the University's web page and other promotional materials.

For the marketing of distance education modules initiated by Faculties, the corresponding costs will be the shared responsibility of the Faculty and CEODL, based on the services provided. The marketing of CEODL-initiated non-credit bearing courses will be fully coordinated by CEODL.

8.2. Admission/Registration

All students participating in credit-bearing distance education Courses of Study must first be admitted to the University. Students in degree programmes must meet the same matriculation and graduation requirements as those of on-campus students. Requirements for non credit-bearing courses will be set by CEODL in consultation with the academic unit that will deliver these courses or by the external client who requested the courses.

Students at remote locations will be registered online, by mail, in advance of the starting date of sessions, or they may be registered on-site in particular situations.

The Admissions Office in collaboration with Enterprise Applications Services oversees the processing of admissions and the enrolment process. Students wishing to participate in the distance education courses are expected to follow normal registration process. Students can apply for admission to the University without coming to campus, by completing UTech's web-based admissions application. Details regarding credit-bearing courses can be obtained in the Admission and Faculty Offices.

8.3. Prior Learning Assessment

Pursuant to its stated commitment to offer programmes of the highest academic quality that are flexible, accessible and responsive to national and regional needs, UTech **“recognizes the measurable value of life-long experiential and work-based learning”** and **“offers entry to its programmes for mature adults (25 years and older) who demonstrate the ability to manage university level programmes.”** (See UTech Prior Learning Assessment Policy)

Consequently all distance education courses of study, in accordance with the Prior Learning Assessment Policy, for designated courses, will accept portfolios as evidence of prior learning and achievement and grant credit for relevant demonstrated work, training and/or life experiences that correspond to designated courses or modules.

8.4. Graduation Requirements

The conditions for award of undergraduate certification are as outlined in Regulation 3 – Academic Progress and Granting of Awards of the UTech Student Handbook. Consequently, to qualify for certificates or diplomas offered in the distance education programme of credit-bearing courses of study, students must have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.7 or higher. The GPA calculation includes the grades awarded in required modules of the certificate or the diploma.

9. LIBRARY, LABORATORY AND OTHER RESOURCES

9.1. Virtual Library Resources

The library system as an integral part of the distance education network at UTech offers a variety of online information resources, including books, journals and multimedia materials.

The Calvin McKain Library provides copies of required texts, videotapes and CDs, on request, from specified service points or partner libraries. On-campus service points are located at the Slipe Pen Road campus, the Faculty of the Built Environment and at the Drug Information Services in the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences.

Documents can also be provided by document delivery or through interlibrary loans. Some examples of online databases are the NetLibrary. This database can be accessed by creating a free account (an account affiliation). It provides approximately 600 e-books that have been purchased and others that are free.

A web-based interface also provides access to the Library's online catalogue – CALCAT. This web-based interface facilitates access to the Library's catalogue, so that learners can search items on reserve, request information, view their accounts and access online databases through the Knowledge Portal. CALCAT can be accessed at www.utech.edu.im

Access to certain databases on the Knowledge Portal requires a password, and other databases have to be accessed through the UTech server. Database passwords will be given to students who require them and they are responsible for protecting the security of these passwords.

Examples of such databases include *Cengage Learning*, which provides a wealth of information on various subjects, including information on Education. The *EBSCO* database hosts a number of online databases for academic journals, the Avery index to Architecture periodicals, business news and library information science and technology abstracts.

9.2. Lab Resources

Wireless access points are available on campus to students who have laptops. The number of wireless access points is being increased extensively across the campus, to accommodate the growing demand for internet-based courses.

The provision for additional dedicated spaces for technology-mediated learning, such as general purpose laboratories and learning resource centres, where students can access online resources and print materials will be reflected in the wider University's Strategic Plan, and

embedded within the operational plans of each Faculty and pertinent central support unit (CEODL, LTSU, Library). The University's comprehensive budget for academic development and the supporting technology infrastructure will also reflect the expansion and continuous upgrading of laboratories and designated classrooms with multi-media resources for online students,⁹ And the upgrading of the quota system for increased students access to printers through the use of electronic cards.

9.3. Acquisition of Other Resources

Instructional materials, including print and software, for distance instruction are handled through UTech's Bookstore, the CEODL Office or the Faculty Office and the Library. With regard to the provision of text books, instructors will communicate their needs to the UTech Bookstore personnel in a similar manner as for traditional face-to-face courses, but with appropriate time to facilitate special arrangements for distribution to distance learners. Within each Faculty, there should be one designated person to provide oversight of the arrangements with the Bookstore for the timely shipping and distribution of texts across Jamaica, as appropriate for distance learners. For courses delivered overseas, there will be an in-country coordinator to manage the local learner support systems. Electronic materials will be made available through the online course portals and the Library system.

At the start of each distance education course, instructors should clearly identify for students, the list of materials that will be required. Students may then contact the Bookstore to order needed books and materials. Supplementary materials are to be made available in printed or electronic form.

UTech will seek to acquire relevant proprietary software, for courses that require such software, by negotiating discounted costs or acquiring educational versions of specialized proprietary software and building these costs into the costs of the course.

10. STUDENT SUPPORT

UTech is committed to providing appropriate and adequate access to the diverse range of student services required for effective participation of distance students. These services include admissions, financial aid, academic advisement, counseling, delivery of course materials and access to the Learning Management System and library facilities.

In the *Online Learner Guide* the University clearly communicates the services that are provided and how to access them. If the University is unable to directly provide services, it contracts and/or outsources the delivery of these services. These services will be provided in diverse formats - web-based, on campus and/or at a location convenient to the student, and will be accessible during hours that are convenient for the distance student.

10.1. Virtual Support – Distance Learners

The University is committed to the provision of adequate funding and personnel to support technology infrastructure—hardware, software, and networking.

⁹ Technology-enhanced or SMART classrooms, with server, file-sharing capabilities, a dedicated projector screen and audio equipment to support multi-media are required.

Through the LTSU, NOSS and CEODL there is the integration of help desk facilities for students and Faculty, with prompt solutions to technical problems related to the LMS. Help desk staff are well trained and have the resources needed to provide prompt and reliable support.

10.2. Orientation, Response Time

All distance education students should participate in an Orientation Session before the start of each distance education course, to prepare them for effective distance learning. This Orientation Session as well as the *Online Learner Guide* should provide student with a description of the Course content and assessment strategies, the delivery mode, support services available, study tips for success and technical requirements for individual access to personal computers.

The Faculty offering the courses and instructors should also provide mechanisms for communicating expectations and assessing student capability for success in distance education. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

- The University's communication, marketing and recruiting efforts, particularly through CEODL should clearly state expectations for the capability and conduct of the distance education student;
- A basic assessment of online readiness, where required; (See Appendix 1 for *Online Readiness Questionnaire*)
- Provision of an Orientation Session and the *Online Learner Guide*;
- Provision of information on distance education or blended format courses in the Summary of Programmes;
- Communication by instructors of expectations and requirements in depth so that students who are enrolled are aware of the minimum requirements for success.

The Instructor of each Course shall indicate to students the timeframe and mechanisms in place for the provision of feedback. This provision shall be guided by the principle that students should be provided with regular and appropriate feedback on their current level of knowledge and competence, as well as suggestions for improvement.

10.3. Feedback/Handling Complaints

The resolution process for resolving student complaints at UTech is primarily dependent upon the type of issue being addressed, and applies to students enrolled in distance education courses as well as students enrolled in traditional face-to-face courses.

Distance education students may make initial complaints related to their academic experience to their Tutor and/or Academic Advisor or Country Coordinator. Unresolved issues may then be addressed by the Programme Director, Head of the Department or School and/or Dean of the Faculty.

Students experiencing problems with technology have several outlets for resolution, depending on the type of problem encountered. Students should contact their instructor/tutor with complaints about the technology employed in the course, the LTSU Help Desk and Information Systems, and as a last resort, the CEODL Office.

11. STUDENTS RECORDS

11.1. Transcripts

The Student Records Office maintains and stores students' educational records for credit-bearing courses of study and issues transcripts and other academic records at their request. (See Student Handbook for additional details)

The student records for non-credit courses including those awarding continuing education units or professional development units will be managed by CEODL, on a separate database, but in consultation with the Student Records Office.

Students have the right to access their academic and institutional records. To access their records, students must submit a signed request by mail or fax (emails are not acceptable) the Students Records Office. Access is determined on an individual basis. However, the Students' Records Office does not release official transcripts if a student is in debt to UTech. No partial transcripts of a record are issued.

Student transcripts do not distinguish between academic courses taken on campus and those completed through the distance education modality.

12. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Faculty development and support are essential to the success of the distance education at UTech. CEODL will provide training and opportunities for professional development for Faculty members so that they will have the requisite skills and resources to adapt to the new teaching and learning environment of technology-mediated distance education and to effectively engage in the delivery of distance learning experiences.

12.1. Faculty Training

It is expected that any Faculty member who is involved in distance education will also participate in the required training sessions on the use of the LMS, promotion of student interaction and management of situations characteristic to the delivery of distance education.

Training will focus on such areas as instructional design, video production, graphics production, access to authoring tools, and other computer-based resources. Information on effective instructional strategies is also included in Faculty training and support materials.

Training required for each online Faculty member will include areas relating to:

- **Course development**, including: procedures, contact information, timelines, preferred content formats, materials submission protocols, and best practices);
- **Instructional design** issues in developing or adapting face-to-face courses to the online environment such as syllabus concerns; **course objectives and student-centered learning outcomes**; development of appropriate **assignments and activities** for the distance learning environment; varying information and activity presentation to accommodate different learning styles; **assessment strategies**, choosing the best technologies available for course delivery, understanding the needs and expectation of distance education students and **creating multi-media resources**.
- **Learning Management System** - overview of features; effective presentation of resources; use of tools for promotion of interaction and creation of online communities such as chat and forum; tools for collaboration such as workshop and wikis and tools for feedback such as choice and survey tools;
- **Accessing Resources** – General and specific library resources available to enrich distance education courses; use of the digital resources on the Web in the form of documents, databases, archives, recordings, audio files, video files, magazines and instructor resource materials.
- **Key Strategies and Issues in Distance Education** – fair use of copyrighted materials; administrative strategies for managing courses and contingency plans for dealing with problems in distance education, including equipment breakdown.
- **Basic Computer Skills** – working knowledge of computer hardware used to teach online courses; computer file management; document preparation; e-mail and web browsing.

12.2. Faculty Support

To support Faculty members involved in distance education, an internal network of all operational managers of the pertinent support service units comprising CEODL, LTSU, NOSS, EAS, OCDE, the Library and Faculty representatives will be responsible for the provision of instructional Programmes as well as access to the necessary technical and communication resources to facilitate development of skills in classroom management and technology-based instructional design.

UTech provides support to Faculty involved in distance education in the following ways:

- Web access to this *Distance Education Policies and Guidelines* document.
- Orientation and training sessions based on an Integrated UTech Training Plan
- User-friendly templates for designing course materials

- Individual technological assistance
- Opportunities to participate in CEODL Forum
- A copy of the monthly CEODL Newsletter
- Advice from the CEODL Faculty Liaison
- Sandbox in Moodle which provides a safe area for practice and trial and error in the development of online courses, before review by CEODL and export to the LMS for delivery.
- Learning Commons/Learning Support Centre (CEODL) for support, mentoring and consultation in instructional design, including provision for walk-in consultation on eFridays
- Priority consideration in new technology purchases and updates at the departmental level.
- Priority technical support in the design and maintenance of delivery systems, as provided by the LTSU
- External short term fellowships for professional development
- Support for research and pedagogical models in Distance Education

There will a system of faculty mentoring where experienced technology users are linked with new members of staff to help them develop their distance teaching capabilities. Within each Faculty there are assigned personnel including the CEODL Liaison, designated Fellows and multimedia technologists who help to coordinate and implement distance learning initiatives in collaboration with CEODL. The network of distance learning Fellows across the University will provide an opportunity for sharing good practice.

12.3. Faculty Evaluation

Distance education courses or modules should be evaluated to determine the view of students regarding both the quality of instruction. Student input is primarily solicited using the Course Evaluation Form administered at the conclusion of each course. This instrument seeks student reaction concerning the organization and presentation of the course content, interaction with the Faculty member, interaction with the Learning Management System and access to supplemental resources. (See Appendix 2 for sample *Distance Education Student Course Evaluation Form*)

Participating Faculty are to be surveyed periodically by the CEODL in collaboration with OCDE to assess their perceptions of their effectiveness in utilizing the technology, appropriateness of different teaching methods for distance instruction, access to support resources, success of distance learning students as compared to on-campus students, effectiveness of interactions with CEODL and suggestions for improvement. Results are then analyzed by both CEODL and OCDE and utilized in the planning process.

12.4. Professional Development Programme

CEODL through collaboration with a number of external partners will facilitate externally-funded short-term fellowships for professional training in various aspects of the design and delivery of distance education.

CEODL in collaboration with FELS will provide a series of credit-bearing modules in Distance Education for certification as a Distance Education Tutor.

Continuing Education Units will also be awarded by CEODL in collaboration with the Human Resource Department to Faculty members who participate in modules offered under the integrated *UTech Training and Development Plan*.

13. ALLIANCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATIVE OFFERINGS

The creation of educational opportunities for diverse learners is the principal mission of the CEODL Unit. Distance education is an essential part of this mission because of its potential to increase access, promote adoption of flexible delivery formats, generate revenue and increase the visibility and relevance of UTech. Institutional capacity to provide distance education and the actual implementation of distance education initiatives are undertaken in partnerships with development agencies, educational institutions, regional organizations, government agencies, the business community and professional associates.

Partnerships for strengthening capacity for distance education are usually met through technical cooperation agreements with external agencies and focus on training, professional development, development and conversion of courses, provision of technological infrastructure and support for strategic planning. Expansion of course offerings in distance education are effected through memoranda of understanding, franchise agreements and promotion of academic outreach programmes with a variety of educational institutions and outreach sites.

Extra and intramural offerings of distance education courses at UTech require adoption of a collaborative model with internal and external partners. Internally, every effort should be made to form cross-functional instructional teams enriched with expertise in instructional design, content resource, learner support services, graphic design, multi-media, learning technology, quality assurance and resource coordination.

13.1. Geographic Coverage

UTech seeks to increase geographic penetration of programmes, not only through articulation linkages with community colleges and other accredited educational providers and through divestment of lower level certificate and diploma programmes to other providers but also

through the introduction, of existing degree programmes in modular forms and as distance education courses, in partnership with these training providers.

UTech also actively participates in regional projects for the development of distance education courses in response to demands of overseas students and in support of efforts to improve the quality of and access to tertiary level courses throughout the Caribbean.

13.2. Local versus Collaborative Tuition

UTech continues to promote initiatives for collaborative tuition through execution of memoranda of understanding. This mode of collaboration is encouraged, particularly in the context of promotion of institutional capacity building of the region's Tertiary Level Institutions. Specific initiatives are to be embraced that prepare Faculty members to adapt face-to-face courses to the online environment and develop and share a common core of online courses.

13.3. Outreach and Franchise Programmes

Existing relationships of outreach and franchise arrangements with community colleges and other tertiary institutions may include offerings of distance education courses so as to expand academic outreach and access to UTech services.

14. COMMUNICATION AND WORKFLOW

14.1. Mapping Internal Processes/Approval Levels/Timelines

The entire instructional design and delivery process should comprise the following steps: incorporating the phases of submission of proposals, completion of course templates, selection and development of materials, review of instructional strategy and materials, adding content to the LMS, piloting the course, conducting student orientation, course implementation and evaluation. The flow chart outlining this process of analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation is presented in Appendix 4.

For minor changes in the adaptation of face-to-face courses, approval of changes should be obtained and instructional design process initiated at least one semester in advance of the date for course delivery. Exceptions may be entertained in cases where Faculty members have already secured approval for the module, are competent in the use of the LMS and are well advanced in the selection and development of material.

For major changes in modules and courses, approval should be secured by the end of April of the Academic Year preceding the one in which the changes are to be implemented in the course or module. (See *Policy Guidelines on Major and Minor Changes to Courses and Module*,

approved by the Academic Policy Committee for definition of minor changes to courses and modules).

14.2. Iterative Cycle for Instructional Design

The process adopted for instructional design should provide for review and subsequent revision, where required, at each stage.

Piloting of the course should be conducted and the findings from this treated as formative evaluation for improvement of the course design. This iterative process should be undertaken for each module, where applicable, but piloting conducted of the entire course.

14.3. Implementation and Quality Monitoring

Steps outlined in Sections 5 – Student and Course Evaluation will be used to monitor quality of implementation and at the end of the course or module, summative evaluation incorporating provisions outlined in Section 5 and Section 12, will be conducted.

15. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND COPYRIGHT

15.1. Intellectual Property

All copyright issues of distance education will be guided by the Intellectual Property Policy of UTech, including the following broad principles:

- Content developed for distance learning courses will comply with copyright law.
- In the use of copyrighted material, the usual permission should be acquired and submitted by the Faculty member with the course proposal for approval. If there is doubt about copyright ownership, Faculty members should substitute other resources where copyright permission is clear and obtainable, or substitute resources that are in the public domain.
- Faculty members involved in content development should be aware of Utech’s policies with regard to content ownership and to that end; the copyright and intellectual property policies of UTech will be written and accessible to Faculty members.
- UTech is the owner of copyrighted material created for a course or other institutional purpose within the prescribed duties of the staff or Faculty member’s or as contracted by UTech.

15.2. Informed Consent

Students should be informed about the nature and requirements of a distance education course or module before enrolment. Students should also be advised and consulted on any changes proposed for incorporating elements of distance education in a face-to-face course or module for which they have already registered.

Students who are involved in fieldwork or research that involves the participation of other persons, should be instructed to advise such persons of the facts and implications of their involvement, and should obtain the consent of such persons based on the persons' appreciation and understanding of the facts. Persons who do not understand the relevant facts or who lack the reasoning faculties to arrive at an understanding of these facts, should not be asked to participate. A consent form should be signed by such persons.

GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

EAS – Enterprise Application Services

CEODL – The Office of Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning

LMS – Learning Management System

LTP – Learning and Teaching Policy

LTSU – Learning Technologies Support Unit

NOSS - Network Operations and Systems Services

OCDE – Office of Curriculum Development and Evaluation

UTech – University of Technology, Jamaica

Definitions

Active learning: a way of designing learning materials that provides a series of activities to help learners master content, on the assumption that learners will only learn if they actively engage with the material presented.

Asynchronous communication refers to two-way communication in which there is a delay between when a message is sent and when it is actually received. In distance learning, asynchronous communication often takes the form of email, voice mail and discussion boards.

Asynchronous learning: a type of learning in which learners and instructors use computers to exchange messages, engage in dialogue and access resources; the interaction can occur in delayed-time when they are not linked at the same time.

Bandwidth refers to the capacity of a connection to transport digital content, measured usually in terms of transfer speed (bits-per-second). Text can be transferred more quickly than audio or video resources, although compression of such resources may be used to reduce their size with less demand on bandwidth.

Blended learning combines different delivery methods and learning activities to create the most effective learning experience to accommodate different styles of learning. This approach often involves the adoption of different technologies, activities and types of events, which may include face-to-face sessions, e-learning and self-paced instruction.

OR

Blended learning is the combination of multiple approaches to teaching or to educational processes which involve the deployment of a diversity of **methods** and **resources** or **learning experiences** which are derived from more than one kind of information source. Examples

include combining technology-based materials and traditional print materials, group and individual study, structured pace study and self-paced study, tutorial and coaching.

Continuing education: education that is usually not for credit, but which can be delivered on campus or at a distance.

Courseware is computer software whose primary purpose is teaching or self-learning. A set of lessons designed to be used with a computer.

Flexible learning: emphasizes the creation of environments for learning that have the following characteristics: convergence of open and distance learning methods, media and classroom strategies; learner-centered philosophy; recognition of diversity in learning styles and in learners' needs; recognition of the importance of equity in curriculum and pedagogy; use of a variety of learning resources and media; fostering of lifelong learning habits and skills in learners and staff.

Higher Order Skills – Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation. The delineation of higher order skills is part of a broader effort to define the nature of thinking and is mainly associated with the work of the Bloom et al and their identification of the levels of thinking in the cognitive domain. In this model there are six levels of thinking skills ranging from the lowest to the highest: namely knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The three highest levels are defined as follows:

Analysis: a level of learning that involves breaking down material into its meaningful parts so that the relationship among the parts can be determined.

Synthesis: a level of learning activities that involves combining parts to form a new whole.

Evaluation: a level of learning that involves judging the value of the material with reference to a specific set of criteria.

Instructional Design: a process of designing instruction in a way that enables learners to learn effectively.

Learning Community involves a group of people who share common values and beliefs and are committed to the pursuit of goals, problems or projects that provide the basis for their active engagement in generating and sharing new knowledge. Members engage in flexible and negotiated learning activities, characterised by high levels of dialogue, interaction and collaboration. Members work and learn from each other and have the opportunity to influence the activities of the community which, in turn meets the needs of its members.

Learning Management System provides a suite of tools to educators to create Course web sites, provide access control so that only enrolled students can view the web site and offer a wide variety of tools for uploading and sharing material, holding online discussions and chats, setting and taking quizzes and surveys, uploading, gathering and reviewing assignments and recording grades.

Learning Outcome is a statement which identifies what a learner is expected to know, understand or do as a result of successfully completing a process of learning.

Learning styles or preferences refer to an individual's natural, habitual and preferred way of absorbing, processing and retaining new information and skills. Learning style embraces channels such as vision, hearing, movement, touching, or any combination of these through which a person best understands and retains learning. It can also refer to active or passive, as well as reflective or impulsive learning styles.

Low Threshold Application is a teaching/learning application of information technology, which is reliable, accessible, easy to learn, user-friendly and relatively inexpensive.

Online Learning Environment involves use of the Internet for learning via coursework or information posted on the Web, electronic communication and other instructional activities.

Open education: a way of providing learning opportunities that implies a lack of formal entry requirements, prerequisite credentials or an entrance examination.

Prior Learning Assessment is a process adopted at some colleges and universities UTech by which the prospective learners can earn academic credit for what they already know and can do, through the formal evaluation of an experiential or prior learning portfolio that identifies, documents and assesses significant college-level learning acquired through informal or independent study, work experience, community service, non-credit courses and other life experiences. PLA is based on the belief that college-level learning is not limited to the classroom.

Reusable Objects refer to learning resources, usually digital and web-based, that can be used and re-used to support learning. They are re-usable units of learning with instructional content and may also include assessment tools.

Synchronous communication refers to live, real-time communication. Such communication includes face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, instant messaging and chatting online.

Synchronous learning: a type of learning in which learners and instructors use computers to exchange messages, engage in dialogue and access resources; the interaction can occur in real-time (synchronously) when learners and instructors are communicating at the same time from different places.

Technology-mediated learning: in the context of teaching and learning, a system in which a media other than print has a major role.

Reference

1. *An Overview of Open and Distance Learning – A Training Toolkit* (Commonwealth of Learning 2000)
2. ODP Approach for Blended Learning – Office for Domestic Preparedness – <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/blendedlearning/pdfs/bls.pdf>
<http://www.elearners.com/resources/glossary.asp>

APPENDIX 1

The University of Technology, Jamaica
Office of Continuing Education Open & Distance Learning (CEODL)
Creating Educational Opportunities for Diverse Learners

ONLINE READINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following questionnaire to indicate your willingness to participate in this online Course.

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
 ID No.: _____ Course/Module: _____
 Telephone No.: _____ E-mail: _____

		YES	NO
Section 1: My Technical Competencies			
<u>CAN YOU:</u>			
1	Use Keyboard and Mouse?		
2	Create, Save and Print Files?		
3	Log on to the internet and move between different websites (URLs)?		
4	Use web browser tools to navigate, print and bookmark web pages? Conduct internet searches, use search engines, download file and install new browser		
5	software?		
6	Resolve common error messages on the internet such as "Connection timed out", and "Page not found"?		
7	Log in and out of an email account, send and receive e-mail, and attach and download files?		
8	Participate in chat rooms and post messages in a forum?		
9	Troubleshoot to reboot computer and fix printer errors?		
Section 2: My Learning Competencies/Skills/Aptitudes			
<u>DO YOU HAVE:</u>			
10	Skills in using Word Processing software (Microsoft word)?		
11	Skills in using Spreadsheet software (Microsoft Spreadsheet)?		
12	Skills in using Presentation software (Microsoft PowerPoint)?		

	YES	NO
13 Strong Interpersonal skills (group discussions, peer reviews)?		
Section 3: My Motivational Competencies		
<u>ARE YOU MOTIVATED ENOUGH TO OVERCOME...?</u>		
14 Demands of work, family, and other pressures of your social and personal life?		
15 Isolation, since learning at a distance can be very lonely?		
16 The perceived impersonal nature of the information communication technology, which largely replace face-to-face contact?		
17 Any difficulties encountered in learning how to navigate Moodle?		
18 Difficulties in expressing ideas in written form?		
19 Any lack of self-discipline?		
20 Any frustration caused by the time it takes to obtain feedback from other students and your tutors?		
21 Make effective use of the limited opportunities that you will have for direct communication with the instructor?		
22 Overcome any shyness you may feel in making you needs known to your tutor?		
Section 4: My Study Habits		
<u>ARE YOU WILLING TO:</u>		
22 LOG IN REGULARLY to your classes, usually at least three times per week?		
23 Plan to ensure enough TIME TO STUDY and complete assignments?		
24 Take notes as you study?		
25 Commit SIX TO NINE HOURS OF WORK PER WEEK?		
26 Communicate in WRITING AND READ the writing of others?		
27 Work with others via EMAIL and chat to complete protects?		
28 “SPEAK UP” to their instructors when problems arise?		
29 SHARE YOUR IDEAS?		
30 Carefully CONSIDER YOUR RESPONSE TO OTHERS?		
31 Have your ideas challenged by others?		

Date: _____

Signature _____

Thank you.

APPENDIX 2**The University of Technology, Jamaica**

Office of Continuing Education Open & Distance Learning (CEODL)

*Creating Educational Opportunities for Diverse Learners***Distance Education Student Course Evaluation Form****Strongly Agree (SA)/Agree (A)/Undecided (U)/Disagree (D)/Strongly Disagree (SD)**

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------|
| 1 | The Orientation Session on Moodle was helpful. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 2 | The learning experience was organized so that students could easily benefit from it. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 3 | There was general agreement between the objectives of the Module and what was actually taught. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 4 | The layout and structure of this blended Module were well designed. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 5 | The content of the Module was: | |
| | Interesting | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| | Challenging | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| | Adequate to meet stated objectives | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 6 | The workload of this Module was sufficiently challenging. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 7 | Feedback on assignments was clear and effective. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 8 | My Instructor encouraged me to persevere with the Module | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 9 | My Instructor moderated/facilitated online discussions well. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 10 | Assignments were returned within the agreed time. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 11 | Assessment and examinations reflected the important points or topics of the Module. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 12 | The blend of face-to-face and online sessions was appropriate for the Module. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 13 | The grading system was clearly stated and objective. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 14 | It was easy to find my way around (navigate) the Learning Management System – Moodle | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 15 | I was able to upload assignments without technical difficulty. | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 16 | My knowledge and interest in the subject have increased as a result of the Module | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 17 | My technical skills have improved as a result of taking this blended Module | SA/A/U/D/SD |
| 18 | I have developed a greater sense of responsibility for my learning experience through the use of technology. | SA/A/U/D/SD |

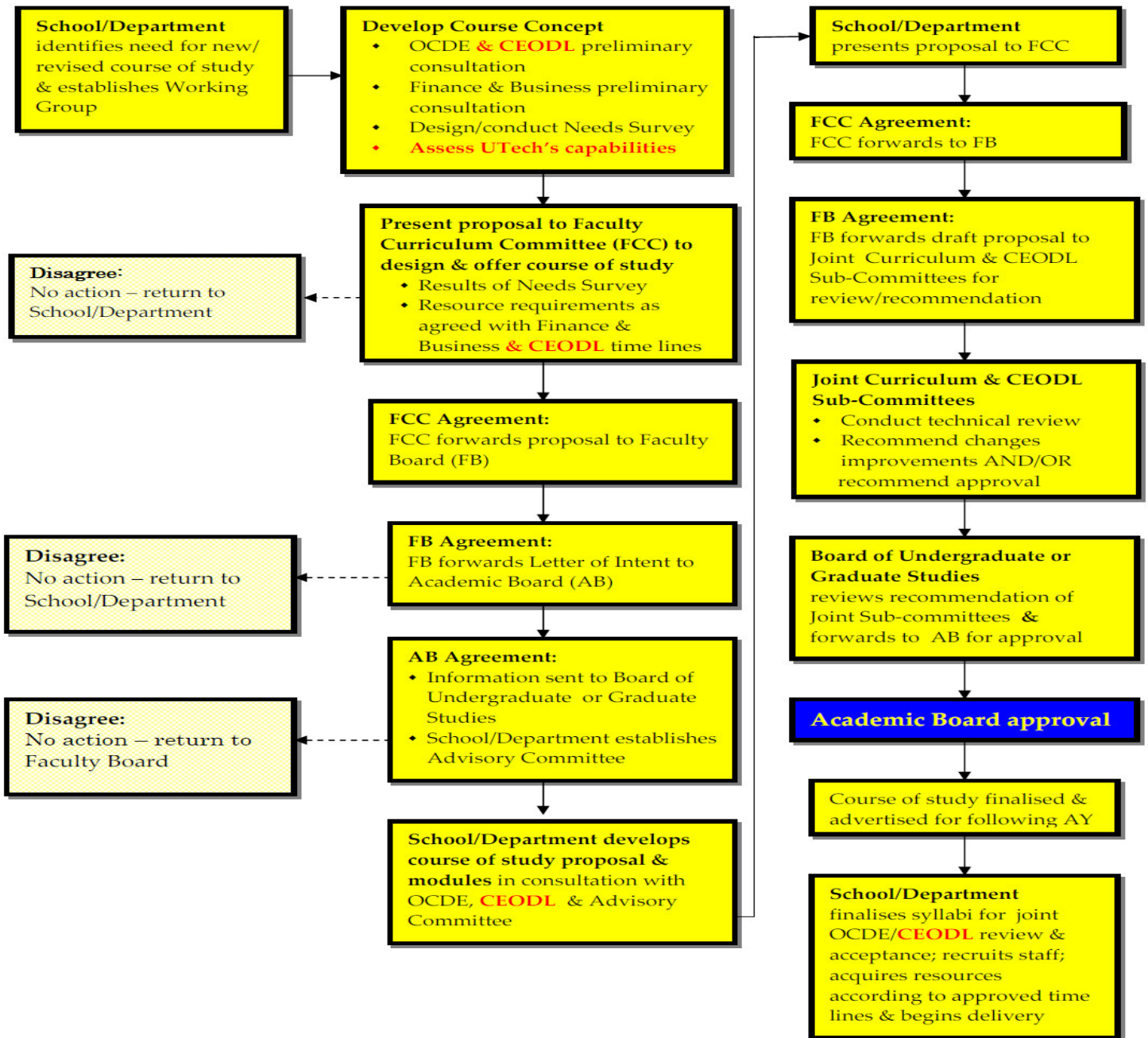
Strongly Agree (SA)/Agree (A)/Undecided (U)/Disagree (D)/Strongly Disagree (SD)

- 19 I would recommend this blended Module to other students. SA/A/U/D/SD
- 20 When I needed technical support I usually received help from:
- LTSU
 - CEODL
 - Instructor
 - Other students
 - Other:.....
- 21 I estimate that the amount of time spent working on assignments and online activities ranged from:
- 0-5 hours
 - 6-10 hours
 - 11-15 hours
 - Over 16 hours
- 22 I obtained access to the online elements of the Module most of the time from:
Home
- Computer Laboratory
 - CEODL
 - Library
 - Other.....
- 23 In my opinion the two best features of the Module were:
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion forum | <input type="checkbox"/> Chat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video | <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading material | <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face session |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wiki | <input type="checkbox"/> Journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glossary | <input type="checkbox"/> Key term activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... | |
- 24 In my opinion the two worst features of the Module were:
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion forum | <input type="checkbox"/> Chat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video | <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading material | <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face session |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wiki | <input type="checkbox"/> Journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glossary | <input type="checkbox"/> Key term activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... | |
- 25 What would I change about the Module and why.

APPENDIX 3

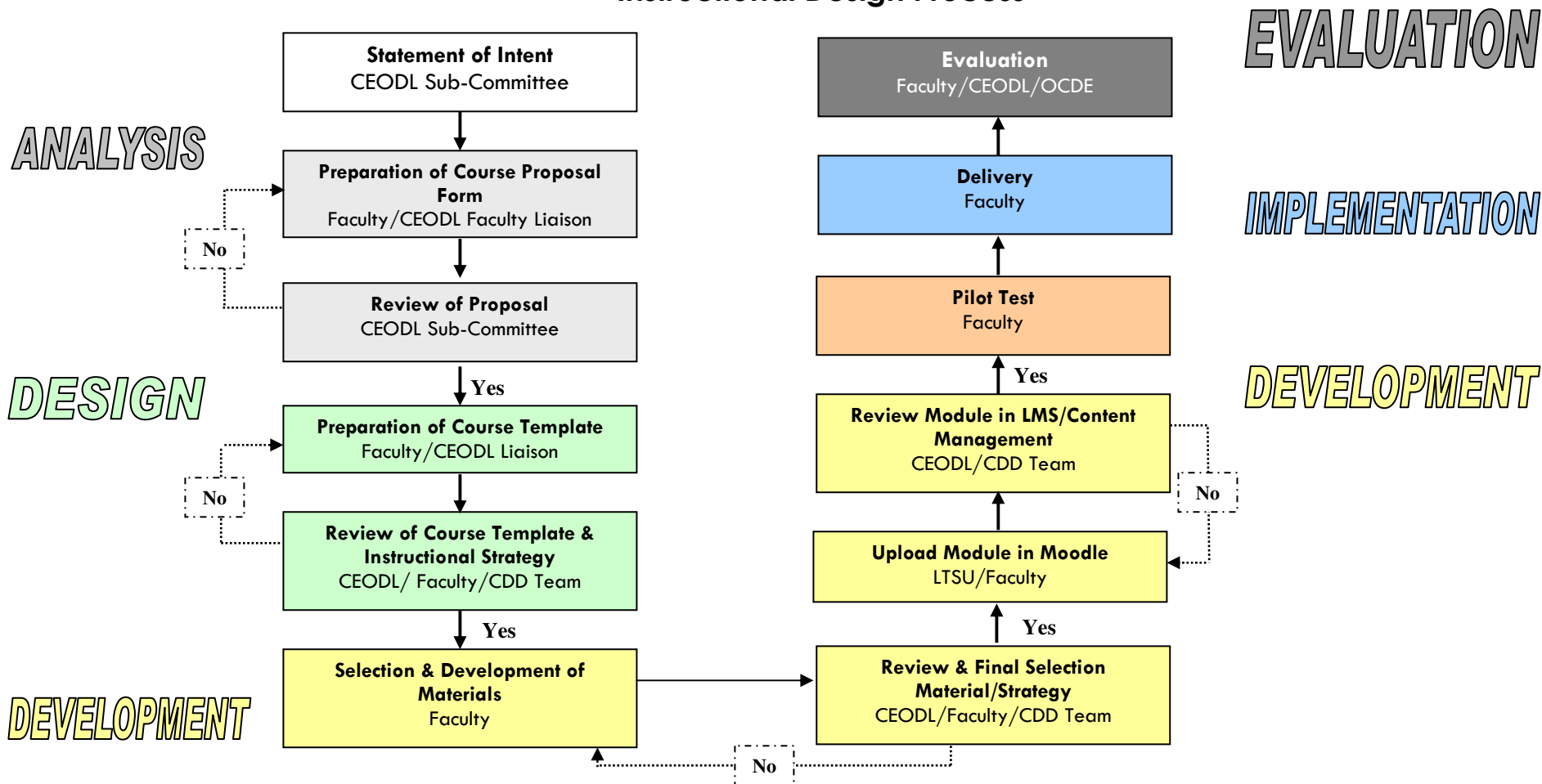
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, JAMAICA

MAJOR CHANGES - PROPOSED STEPS FOR ONLINE/BLENDED LEARNING COURSE OF STUDY DEVELOPMENT



The University of Technology, Jamaica
Office of Continuing Education Open & Distance Learning (CEODL)

Instructional Design Process



At all stages of the process CEODL may be contacted for assistance