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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to aid telecourse faculty with various aspects of administering telecourses, Charles County Community College (CCCC), in La Plata, Maryland, has produced a manual designed to foster coherence in telecourse instruction. Introductory material explains that the manual is distributed on disk so that can be updated easily and discusses the place of telecourses in CCCC's curriculum. Subsequent sections focus on: (1) the process by which decisions about which telecourses to offer are made; (2) the characteristics of telecourse students; (3) instructor responsibilities for submitting grades and keeping attendance records, developing a complete course syllabus, and following other academic procedures of the college; (4) attendance requirements for course orientation sessions; (5) orientation session activities, such as reviewing the syllabus, establishing that students have completed prerequisites, and fostering networking for group work; (6) standard forms; (7) pay; (8) ways of conducting the course; and (9) course evaluation, including the telecourse evaluation survey. Finally, the manual presents a sample telecourse syllabus, which provides information about the instructor, a course description, logistical information, and material on assignments and grading. (MAB)

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A Model Manual For Telecourse Faculty.

by William R. Klink

Charles County Community College

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A Model Manual for Telecourse Faculty

Telecourses and other distance learning modes of instruction have become a major new direction in the delivery of higher education to a wider population of students than those students able to afford the time to travel to a campus location for instruction. Telecourse students have special needs that must be addressed by faculty teaching telecourses so that student learning can be at least as smooth and coherent as the learning that their counterparts have access to in a classroom situation.

To foster coherence in telecourse instruction, Charles County Community College has developed a Faculty Manual for those instructing telecourses. It deals with the organization of and the complexities of administering telecourses, gives helpful advice on details of administering telecourses, and identifies experienced faculty who have solutions to certain problems that inexperienced faculty are likely to face.

This manual may serve as a guide to those at any college who wish to compile a telecourse manual which will fill the needs of that individual college.

The manual is available at Charles County Community College in electronic and print forms for both ease of accessibility for all faculty and so that it can be easily updated. Perhaps the most important aspect of such a manual is its updatability--a factor that those at other colleges may wish to emulate in the formatting of their own manual.

Faculty Manual for Telecourses at Charles County Community College July 1993

Introduction

The material in this manual is meant to aid telecourse administrators with various aspects of running telecourses for Charles County Community College.

Because the policies change frequently, this manual is presented in electronic form so as to be instantly updatable. It is available in WordPerfect for IBM users and in Microsoft Word for Macintosh users. Since scanning procedures to this date have not been all that accurate, there may be manuscript errors of a minor nature in either of the versions. If you see anything in this document that is incorrect or that needs clarification, call Dr. William R. Klink at extension 325. He will update the manual to reflect your concerns.

Telecourses are fully accredited courses that are comparable to on campus courses that the College offers. Frequently they are actual sections of courses which run concurrently with the telecourses on campus. But they are also courses that are unique to the telecourse medium. Sometimes called distance learning, these courses do not replace "regular" course offerings but are instead themselves "regular" course offerings. All college courses offered for credit are designed to reflect the standards of the Maryland Higher Education Commission and of the Academic Council of Charles County Community College, which is responsible for approval of all new courses offered by the College. All of the telecourses offered by the College are also offered by other colleges in the Maryland State system. Additionally, the college has a Telecourse Committee that oversees the functioning of all telecourses. The chairman of the committee is Paul Billeter, x315. Jean Fuller of Media Services, x615, coordinates the media aspect of all telecourses for the College. This manual is the result of a decision by the Telecourse Committee to make available to all instructors the "secrets" of telecourse administering. More information can be had from the members of the Committee who can be contacted through Billeter, Fuller, or William Klink, x325. The committee meets infrequently at local pizza restaurants, and you are invited to attend.

Telecourse Administration Rubrics

The decision of what telecourses to offer is made by a consortium of all state colleges in the year prior to their being offered on campus. Each institution then chooses from that list to decide which telecourses it will offer. Wherever possible telecourses should not be cancelled prior the beginning the semester. The LRC's are geared on each campus to handle two different telecourse types, the over the air and the LRC based. The College pays a royalty for most courses that are offered and thus forfeits that fee if any are canceled. Further, the LRC establishes multiple copies of all tapes of telecourse lessons for the students, tapes which will go to waste if the telecourse is canceled.

Student characteristics

Most of the students who take telcourses are older than the traditional age of a college student. They have jobs and families which are demanding of their time. It is not good to require them to attend on campus sessions of any frequency, nor to set up assignments which have inflexible time requirements. After all, they take these courses because their time is not theirs to control. On the other hand, they are probably more motivated and perhaps more organized than are traditional students. If things are made clear to them and sufficient preparation time is allowed, they can do better work than their on campus colleagues, thereby leading you as an instructor to wonder just how valuable an asset you yourself are. No matter; don't worry about it.

Instructor's Responsibilities

The instructor is responsible for the following:

Maintaining a record of student success on the College's official grade and attendance sheet.

Submission of a mid-term grade and a final grade.

A complete syllabus that details all assignments, student responsibilities for on-campus seminars, field trips, or other educational opportunities, required writing assignments, and due dates.

All instructors are given either a Full-Time Faculty Handbook or a Part-time Faculty Handbook by their department chairman prior to the beginning of the academic year or semester. Those handbooks contain valuable information on syllabus requirements and on the academic procedures of the College. Use this handbook as a ready reference.

Orientation Session

The syllabus should be given to the student at the orientation session scheduled for the beginning of the semester and noted on the official

schedule of classes. Students not attending are required to watch a videotape of the session, produced by the college and distributed on all three campuses. Students not attending should be mailed a syllabus immediately after the orientation session. All instructors receive a class list and a set of mailing labels before the scheduled start of classes. These should be used to determine who is in the course and has not shown for the orientation. Students who register late may be on neither list, appearing on one distributed a week to two weeks later. Instructors must consult that second list very closely to make sure that no student gets lost. The orientation session is usually scheduled no later than the week preceding the first telecast of over the air telecourses, but sometimes is scheduled later. In that case students should receive course material as quickly as you can send it to them after getting the mailing labels so that students do not fall behind prior to the orientation. It is friendly to include with the syllabus a welcome letter with an informal tone, one that is calculated to put the student at ease and one that establishes their first impression of you. Remember that you may never ocularly see this student ever, so it is important that written communications set the tone that you want.

Orientation Session Activities

Review syllabus and opening material of the course

Establish that students have met any prerequisites.

If group work is required, provide some networking so that students can get to know each other.

Present information orally and visually because the session is being taped for those unable to attend.

Review important course components.

Verify addresses and phone numbers.

Take attendance to be certain that students have been "oriented." Some students miss the orientation and then complain that they did not understand the course, even though they did not see the videotape. Cover yourself by taking attendance. The LRC will record for you who checked out the videotape of the orientation.

Check for handicapped students so that arrangements can be made for them.

Course forms

Over the years many instructors have devised efficient ways of disseminating and gathering information. Call Klink or the person named below if you want to examine any othe following:

single sheet mailer--R. Brown
term paper topic form P. Billeter
envelopes with instructor's name and college address as return address--
bookstore
return address labels R. Brown
student name and address verification card P. Billeter

Pay

Fulltime faculty are compensated for telecourses the same as they are for any other course. Part time pay is also the same as for any other course. In addition, the following is also policy.

The statements below are from the Minutes of the March 5, 1993 Academic Council meeting:

"2. The issue of faculty pay for telecourses was discussed. Jo informed the group that there are currently three ways of dealing with an over-enrolled telecourse:

1. Split the course into additional sections
 2. Pay the faculty 50% of overload scale for 10 or more students past the original limit.
 3. Give the faculty assistance with the course (e.g., in grading, etc.).
- All three have been done in the past. The department chairs agreed to continue to use these options."

Conducting the course

There are three ways to communicate with distance learners. The first is by sending them notes and newsletters in the mail. Many telecourse instructors send their students a monthly newsletter which contains reminders of assignments due, reviews of previous grades, and updates on events relevant to the course. A second way is by fax. The college has fax machines which you may use for either receiving or sending materials. The third way is the telephone. All instructors have access to the college's phone mail system whether or not they have an office on any of the three campuses. Call the switchboard to find out how to set up a phone mail box if you need assistance.

Evaluation

The telecourse Committee is working on a student evaluation instrument. To date, it is as follows. You should study this survey because it provides a clear look into what the college values in its telecourses.

TELECOURSE EVALUATION SURVEY

Instructor _____ Course _____
Semester: fall spring summer Year _____
County of residence: Calvert Charles St. Mary's

EXCEPTIONAL = A GOOD = B ADEQUATE = C NEEDS IMPROVEMENT = D

INSTRUCTIONS: Using the scale above, mark the appropriate letter space to indicate your evaluation of each item for this telecourse. Please explain your response by writing comments below each question.

1. The value of the orientation was:
2. The usefulness of the syllabus was:
3. The usefulness of written material other than the syllabus
4. The clarity of required telecourse assignments was:
5. The instructor's organization of the telecourse was:
6. The appropriateness of the assignments for learning the material was:
7. The appropriateness of the examinations and/or quizzes for learning the material was:
8. The instructor's responsiveness to questions about the material was:
9. The fairness of the instructor's grading was:
10. The quality of instructional content in the telelessons was:
11. The quality of the text(s) and study guide was:

EXCEPTIONAL = A GOOD = B ADEQUATE = C NEEDS IMPROVEMENT = D

51. The responsiveness of the Testing Center staff was: (Circle which campus: La Plata Calvert St. Mary's)

2. The responsiveness of the LRC staff was:

53. I would give this telecourse an overall rating of:

Please respond to questions 54-58 by marking the appropriate space.

54. Is this the first telecourse you've ever taken?
55. Would you enroll in another telecourse?

56. Would you recommend telecourse instruction to another student.
57. Would you recommend this course to another student.

Please respond in writing to the following questions.

58. What did you like best about this telecourse?
59. What did you like best about the instructor's management of this telecourse?
60. What would you like to see improved in this telecourse?
61. What would you like to see improved in the instructor's management of this telecourse?

Please put a check by the most important reason for your enrollment in this telecourse.

Sample Telecourse Syllabus

Spring 1993

Course Administrator Dr. William R. Klink

Office: FA 115

Tel: local 934-1860; Wash 870-2309; St. Mary's 884-2124, allplus 325. Fax 301/934-5260. Please follow the directions of the prompting voice when calling.

Mailing address Dr. William R. Klink

Languages and Literature Dept.

Charles County Community college

LaPlata, MD 20646

OfficeHours: M, W 9:15-10:15

1:30-2:30

8:45-9:15

CourseDescription

Students learn to evaluate literature and to write essays in which they use evidence effectively. Students write several essays based on selected short stories, poems and plays. 3 lecture hours

Required Orientation Session

Jan 21, 199, 6:00-7:00 pm. LR 102. Those unable to attend must see a videotape of the session available in the media center of the LaPlata campus, the LRC of the St. Mary's campus or at the general purpose area at the Calvert campus

Cable TV presentations

The videotapes of the course may be seen in Charles County on Channel 15, 8am, 1/29/93-4/23/93

LRC videotapes of lessons

The LaPlata, St. Mary's and Calvert campuses each have at their LRC, or in the case of Calvert a general purpose area, where there are videotapes of each of the lessons. These tapes may be checked out for a limited period of time. I would suggest that checking out the videotapes, as you would any book from a library would be a good way of getting access to the telelessons.

Please be responsive in returning the tapes on time so that other students are not unduly restricted in attempting to complete their work.

A Note about Telecourses

Telecourses are an excellent way to gain college credit when unable to attend regularly scheduled classes. Telecourses appeal to employed individuals whose work schedules conflict with scheduled classes, parents whose home responsibilities prevent campus visits, older people, the handicapped, the shy, those geographically distant from campus.

I recognize that campus visits are burdensome for many of you, and thus there are no on-campus requirements that have rigid time lines except for the orientation session. But even that may be viewed on videotape. The only other campus visits will be for each of the three tests that are required, but you will have a number of days to satisfy those requirements.

Course Prerequisite

Eng 1010

Course objectives

Eng 1020 is a continuation of Eng 1010. In Eng 1010 you were generally able to choose the topic upon which you were to write your essay

In Eng 1020, however, the subject matter will be related to the literature assigned. There are two purposes to your writing in this course: 1) to help

you master your your writing skills, 2) to help you develop an understanding of one of the enduring art forms that our culture has to offer literature

Last day for change of student status

If you wish to withdraw from the course and not receive a final grade, you must notify the student records office. If you want to change from audit to credit, you must have done all the written assignments to the change date. If you want to change from credit to audit, you also must have done all the written assignments to the change date. The last day to change your status May 4.

Required Texts

Literature: An Introduction to Reading and and Writing by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry Jacobs, 3rd edition, Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1992.
Study Guide For Literary Visions by Elizabeth Penfield, 1st edition, Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1992.

Optional Texts

any Eng 1010 texts or similar

Course Components

TV sessions on videotape, texts, syllabus, newsletters, essays, and tests.

Nature of assignments

1) Formal essays on literature, examples of which are provided in texts and by course administrator (see attached), the skills for which have been learned in the prerequisite Eng 1010. 2) Multiple choice tests

Assignment format

1) Essays must have a thesis, an opening paragraph, at least three support or topical paragraphs in which evidence is contained to support the thesis, and a concluding paragraph. The length required is 500-750 words
Neither essays shorter nor longer are acceptable. ESPECIALLY FOR THE FIRST ESSAYS, MAKE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND AND CAN WRITE ESSAYS HAVING THE SAME QUALITIES AS THOSE GIVEN TO YOU IN THE HANDOUT OR IN THE TEXTBOOKS. THERE WILL BE NO OPPORTUNITY TO RE-SUBMIT ESSAYS ONCE THEY ARE GRADED.

2) Multiple choice tests are in machine scored format

Test matter

Taken from the Study Guide Self-Test sections

Computation of final grade

In computing final grades, I will transfer letter grades assigned according to Standards for Grading English Papers (see attached) to numerical values on the same system that the College uses to compute your GPA.

A.4

B.3

C-2

D-1

F0

The essay grades will be averaged with the test grades. The test grade conversion to the 4 point standard is as follows:

90-100=4

80-89=3

70-79=2

60-69=1

0-59=0

Scale of Final Grades

Final grade minimum averages are

A=3.550

B=2.50

C=1.50

D=.50

All essays and tests must be completed to earn a grade higher than F for the course

Submission of assignments and tests

All essays must be submitted on time. Tests will be available at the testing areas one week before their due date. The final exam must be taken during the indicated date on the schedule. No tests may be taken after the due date. Essays that are due concurrently with the tests, (that is, the second, fourth and sixth essays) may be left with your test at the testing center when you take your test. Personnel there will forward both the essays and the test to me at the conclusion of the test period.

Hours for Testing Centers and areas

Because of budget cutbacks, access to Testing Centers and testing areas on the three campuses may change from those below. Make sure you call the the campus to be sure that they can accommodate your testing time.

Give yourself an hour to take the test. Do not expect campus personnel to work overtime if you arrive too late to accommodate your needs.

LaPlata M-Th 9-12, and 1-4, 5-9 p.m; F 9-12 and, 1-4 pm; S 10-12 and 1-3 p.m.

St. Mary's M-Th 12-8pm.

Calvert M-Th 12-8:30pm.

Library hours

LaPlata M-Th 8 am-10 pm; F 8 am-4 pm, S 9am-4pm.

St. Mary's M-Th 12-9pm, S 12-3pm.

Calvert Public M-Th 9 am- 9 pm, F 12-5 pm, S 9 am-5 pm.

Student honesty policy

I expect you to do your own work. Plagiarism, the ascribing of another's work falsely to yourself, and any other form of academic dishonesty will be treated as harshly as regulations in The Student Handbook allow.

Learning methodology

1) Read the Study Guide for each lesson

2) You will have to do all the reading assignments in the Study Guide identified in the section of each Lesson called "Lesson Assignment" in the other textbook, Literature. In Literature, you will find that there is reading to be done about literature as well as literature itself. For the reading of the literature assigned in "Lesson Assignment" there are two different ways to "read." The texts marked with an asterisk should be read carefully; the ones not marked with an asterisk can be read quickly. All of your reading assignments will be based on the literature texts listed in the "Lesson Assignments" sections of the Study Guide. You will note that there is much reading to be done for the first few lessons; but most of the literature is not marked with an asterisk and so can be quickly done.

3) For your essay assignments, you are to choose a topic from any of the "Formal Writing Assignments" listed in the lessons for that essay assignment listed below in the Schedule of Assignment Due Dates. You may choose any "Formal Writing" assignments except for those in Module 1, the first three lessons.

4) For your tests, there will be multiple choice items taken from Self-Test material in the separate lessons in the Study Guide. You will see that Self-Test has a few different formats, so I will merely change the format of the questions to conform to the multiple choice format.

Schedule of Assignment Due Dates

The following are the due dates and lessons for the essays and tests:

Feb 15 Lessons 1-6 First Essay Due on short stories
Mar 1 TEST Lessons 1-10, Second Essay Due on shortstories
Mar 15 Lessons 11-14 Third Essay Due, on poetry
Mar 29 TEST Lessons 1-17, Fourth Essay Due, on poetry
April 19 Lessons 18-21, Fourth Essay Due, on drama
May 1-4 FINAL TEST Lessons 18-26, Final Essay on drama