Policy for LMS Certification of Faculty Members

Effective Date: 11/10/11 Revised: 8/27/2020

RATIONALE:

University of South Alabama has a commitment to the most effective uses of its technology infrastructure to support instruction. All courses which fall in the categories of web-enhanced, web-blended and web-online (fully online), require the creation and maintenance of an active course shell in the learning management system (LMS). USAonline, the LMS, has been customized for South Alabama and integrates numerous tools to accomplish tasks such as responsive design, multimedia interaction, learning assessment and preserving academic integrity. In order to provide high quality instruction to their students, faculty at South Alabama need to receive training in order to use USAonline effectively for their course delivery. To assure adherence with federal accessibility standards, all newly created/migrated courses in USAonline designated as fully online (WO) should be reviewed by the Innovation in Learning Center prior to the course being offered to students.

As the University transitions to the Canvas LMS in 2020, all faculty (regardless of previous experience with Canvas) are required to complete USAonline Fundamentals training to best utilize the features of the platform.

POLICY GUIDELINES

Full-time and Regular Part-time *(Benefits Eligible)* Faculty

- All faculty members will demonstrate the competencies required in the USAonline Fundamentals training. These competencies reflect a minimum level of competence in using the University's LMS system. These are posted at (http://southalabama.edu/departments/ilc/usaonlinefundamentals.html). These competencies will be updated as necessary to accommodate changes in the LMS. Upon request, the Innovation in Learning Center (ILC) will provide colleges with an up-to-date spreadsheet listing faculty members who have completed USAonline Fundamentals.

- Faculty members can demonstrate that they have addressed the USAonline Fundamentals competencies in two ways:
  - by successfully completing on-campus training modules delivered by the ILC.
  - by successfully completing the online, self-paced USAonline Fundamentals training. Please see: **http://southalabama.edu/departments/usaonline/**

- Faculty members who have completed USAonline Fundamentals will receive a certificate to that effect.

- New faculty members must complete training before or during the first semester of their appointment.

Temporary Part-time Faculty

- Part-time instructors are strongly encouraged to complete USAonline Fundamentals certification either prior to, or during, their first semester of teaching. Continued employment of part-time instructors may require completion of USAonline certification as a condition of employment.
- Part-time instructors who have completed USAonline Fundamentals will receive a certificate to that effect.

Any faculty member exempted from this policy will be approved by the School/College Dean in a memo copied to the Provost and the Executive Director of the Innovation in Learning Center.

RELATED INFORMATION:

1. **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Compliance** (selected from *Distance Education and the Principles of Accreditation: Documenting Compliance, Guidelines*)

   Comprehensive Standard 6.2

   Definition: **For each of its educational programs, the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members.**

   Comment: All faculty teaching web-enhanced, web-blended and web-online courses are required to complete the USAonline Fundamentals Certification and are issued a credential upon completion. Certification can be obtained through an online, self-paced training module by distance education faculty unable to come to campus.

   Comprehensive Standard 6.5

   Definition: **The institution provides ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty members as teachers, scholars, and practitioners, consistent with the institutional mission**.

   Comment: The Innovation in Learning Center offers workshops, consultations and an annual teaching and learning conference as faculty development opportunity for the institution's faculty.

2. **Learning with Technology Plan** (adopted by the University Trustees)
   Goal 3: Faculty will have access to resources and expertise that enable them to effectively use technology in the learning environment.

- Provide training support for the learning management system.
- Verify faculty qualifications to use the electronic learning management system for the first time.
- Provide ongoing training support.
- Periodically review and upgrade technology as appropriate.