Adventist University of Central Africa

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# THE POLICY FOR ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING AT AUCA

**The Policy for Online Teaching and Learning at AUCA**

**February, 2021**

**Kigali - Rwanda**

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## University Background

The Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) was founded in 1978, but the official opening was held on October 15, 1984. The University was located at Mudende, former Mutura Commune, Gisenyi Prefecture, North-East of Rwanda. In 1994, just before the genocide against Tutsi, the AUCA had seven (7) faculties:

- Faculty of Business Administration (Accounting and Information Management);
- Faculty of Sciences (Mathematics and Physics, Biology and Chemistry, Human Biology and Public Health);
- Faculty of Education (Educational Psychology);
- Faculty of Technology;
- Faculty of Agriculture;
- Faculty of Languages (French and English);
- Faculty of Theology;

Following the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, AUCA temporarily suspended its activities until 7 May 1996, during which time the AUCA reopened a transition Campus at Gishushu, in Kigali City. From that time the University has run only four faculties:

- Faculty of Business Administration, with four departments: Accounting, Management, Marketing and Finance ;
- Faculty of Science in Information Technology, with three departments: Information Management, Networking & Communication Systems, and Software Engineering ;

- Faculty of Education, with six departments: Educational Psychology, English Language and Literature, Accounting, Information Technology, Mathematics and Geography;

- Faculty of Theology

Currently, the university operates on a new campus at Masoro, which is located in Gasabo District, Kigali City. The University is committed to achieve its complete development and expansion.

## Historical Background

With the eruption of Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) face a multifaceted issues regarding teaching and learning. Traditionally, AUCA's teaching and learning mode was a face to face way of delivering knowledge to students. When COVID-19 erupted, AUCA thus adopted an "Online teaching and learning" which was found to be a better alternative way to serve its clients—students—in teaching and learning.

## AUCA Accreditation

The university operates under the charter from the Ministry of Education of the Government of Rwanda, through Higher Education Council (HEC) and as such it is empowered to offer its programmes and confer appropriate degrees. The institution has reciprocal arrangements to recognize its degrees and diplomas from other accredited universities both within the country and elsewhere. Denominationally, the university holds accreditation from Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA) of the Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities worldwide.

## Purpose

On Friday, February --, 2021, the SENATE of AUCA created a special Adhoc committee which was mandated to review AUCA's existing face to face teaching and learning policies and thus create and clarify policies related to a range of online teaching and learning issues at AUCA.

**AUCA Philosophy**

The Adventist University of Central Africa operates on the basis of the Seventh-day Adventist worldview, which holds that God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and the source of true knowledge. The entrance of sin caused man's alienation from God, therefore the restoration of the relation between man and his God is the main aim of the Christian Education that leads students to discover and understand the truth through critical thinking.

**AUCA Mission**

The Adventist University of Central Africa is committed to providing a Christ-centered quality education founded on a holistic approach that prepares people for the service of this life and the life to come.

**AUCA Vision**

The Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) is to be a centre of excellence in undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Quality shall be the hallmark of all its undertakings including research and service delivery to its students, faculty, staff and community at large.

**AUCA Beliefs and Values**

AUCA is a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning that nurtures the mental, spiritual, social and physical capacities of its personnel and students. The values of the University are rooted in the Holy Scripture and should be seen in the daily activities of the university administrators, workers, and students.

Through a process of discernment based on dialogue and reflection, the following AUCA core beliefs and values have been designated:

**Faith**

AUCA is a faith-based institution of higher learning. The faith nurtured in the institution is rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and in the 28 beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While we respect the religious traditions and individual beliefs of our personnel and students, the university administration and faculties are expected to integrate a biblical, Seventh-day Adventist faith into learning activities of our students.

**Integrity**

Concerned with the good of the community in this life and the life to come AUCA commits itself to honesty in all relations with students, faculty, staff and administration. Through integrity AUCA community maintains the trust of the surrounding community and of public and governmental agencies.

**Love**

Informed by the example of Jesus Christ, and by the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church AUCA community demonstrates a spirit of unity and connectedness with one another through expression, courtesy, hospitality, shared values and having communication irrespective of ethnic, gender, or other differences. AUCA community extends this value of love by reaching out to neighbors and to members of the larger civil and ecclesial communities.

**Respect**

AUCA community values and respects the contribution of each member of everyone at the university and the stakeholders to the advancement of the mission of AUCA. Team-spirit is encouraged through supporting one another as colleagues working together for the good of the whole institution.

**Compassion**

Inspired by the example of Jesus Christ we open our hearts to those among us in physical, spiritual and mental need. Besides, AUCA community consciously reaches out beyond the boundaries of AUCA to serve others in need with compassion and mercy.

**Fairness and Justice**

Recognizing the dignity of all persons (students, staff, teachers and administrators) AUCA community seeks to avoid any acts of injustice toward others and address instances of injustice within and outside the university boundaries from a stance of informed advocacy. We hold ourselves accountable to one another and endeavor to practice responsible stewardship of the resources available to us.

**Excellence**

As a faith-based institution of higher learning AUCA community seeks to combine faith with reason in the pursuit of academic excellence. AUCA Senate and Administration call upon all members of its community to individually and professionally excel their respective duties.

**AUCA goals**
As an Adventist University, its principal goals are as follows:

- To promote the development of the mental, spiritual capacities and social strengths of an individual until his highest potential is reached;
- Based on biblical principles the university seeks to help students become useful members of the society not only endowed with intellectual skills, but well-developed character. The university focuses its goals and its objectives on the principles of the Bible;
- To inculcate into the students the desire for a life style based on a balanced natural food, principles of hygiene and physical exercises; and
- To help students become useful members of the community endowed not only with intellectual skills, but also with the most well-balanced character of a good citizen of this world and the world to come.

**Objectives of Online Teaching and Learning at AUCA.**

1. Support and encourage the internal development of the e-learning program by promoting and providing guidelines for training, inclusion of e-learning courses in faculty workloads, and technical support;
2. Provide informational resources and support services for students enrolled in online courses;
3. Identify and address faculty and student needs in teaching and learning online;
4. Encourage and support the use of the Learning Management System (LMS) such as "Moodle" and other technologies, in both face-to-face and online learning environments;
5. Encourage the sharing of effective technology-enhanced teaching and learning practices among faculty;
6. To identify, provide, expand, and coordinate the development of quality courses and programs to meet the needs of e-learners;
7. Increase the number of students who aspire to attend AUCA in the near future or later until the completion of the degree programs;
8. Evaluate periodically and comprehensively every facet of the online teaching and learning and use these results to restructure and improve the program;

**Type of Online Education**

While there are different types of online education that are used by different institutions in teaching and learning, AUCA chose to use the following:

**Hybrid/Blended Teaching and Learning:** Hybrid or blended courses, classes provide an opportunity to take advantage of both online learning and face-to-face interaction utilizing Video Conferencing and/or a Learning Management System such as Moodle that AUCA avails to students and teachers. Different teaching and learning platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and others are used. Other technologies are also used in their due forms. These are for example, e-mail, text and voice chat, web pages, and other multimedia technologies. In Hybrid or Blended teaching and learning, AUCA students attend face-to-face class instructions and in due time or in the current situation many times, the students log in to their e-learning environment each week and per course until a face-to-face opportunity would be given.

Apart from Hybrid/Blended teaching and learning, AUCA also recognizes

**\* E-learning courses:** Where classes are offered with all work being completed using electronic technologies.

**\* Online Courses:** where a course is offered fully online using Moodle or some type of Learning Management System (LMS) or web presence to enhance the course.

**\* Distance Learning:** learning is carried out remotely by using electronic communication and is not bound by geographical locations. Distance learning provides a more flexible course schedule for those that have a family and/or are working students.

**\* Web-Enhanced Courses:** classes are traditional face-to-face courses that use tools in the E-learning environment to expand student learning beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

*Definition of Terms*

1. *Asynchronous*- is a student-centered teaching method that uses online learning resources to facilitate information sharing outside the constraints of time and place among a network of people.
2. *Blended Learning*- refers to a mixing of different learning environments. It combines traditional face-to-face classroom (traditional course) methods with more modern computer and web-based mediated activities.
3. *Hybrid Learning*- "This word is another way to say Blended Learning", refers to a mixing of different learning environments. It combines traditional face-to-face classroom (traditional course) methods with more modern computer and web- based mediated activities.
4. *Learning Management System*- (*LMS*) is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, and reporting of training programs, classroom and online events, E-learning programs, and training content.

5.  *Online*- When a course is taught entirely in virtual space or cyberspace in regards to computer technology.
6.  *Policy-* a policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes./ or [another definition]  a policy is a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situation that has been agreed officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government or a political party.
7.  *Synchronous*- teaching a group of people learning the same things at the same time in the same place, as with video conferencing tools.
8.  *Web-based*- The underlying structure is supported by the internet. i.e. "world wide web"

1. **Accountability and Applicability**

   **Policy**

   The current policy is viewed in terms of accountability, applicability. Thus, the following entities will be accountable in fulfilling the requirements that are stated in this policy:

**Accountability:**

All academic teaching staff, Deans and Heads of the departments, and administrators in all Academic Affairs of AUCA.

**Applicability**

All academic teaching staff, Deans and Heads of the departments, and administrators in all Academic Affairs of AUCA.

**General Introduction**

Placing students at the center of the educational experience, the Adventist University of central Africa (AUCA) provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.

It should be emphasized at the outset that this policy document does not signal any fundamental change in AUCA's commitment to this mission. Indeed, the strength of AUCA will come from its continued commitment to its current mission. The challenges and opportunities associated with online education should be viewed as an opportunity to rethink the policies, processes and structures that support AUCA's mission. The Adventist University of central Africa offers a student-focused learning environment in which interactions between faculty and students are central to instruction regardless of the form of those interactions.

AUCA currently has one online degree program and several other online courses that have developed without any cohesive online education strategy or policies or any broad discussion of online education's role in supporting the university's mission. This document outlines specific policies for online education at AUCA but also contains specific suggestions for the policies, processes and structures that should be reviewed in light of online education.

The following assumption forms the foundation of this document: A course is a course. Quality expectations, academic control and faculty and student rights for online course experiences should be equivalent to those for face-to-face courses.

2. **Modes of Instruction**

Blended >=30% and <=70%; according to the module offered at AUCA. This means that a certain module could be taught at face to face at 30% of the allocated time to the whole module while, the remaining 70% will be taught fully online. In addition, a module could be taught at 70% at face to face while, the remaining 30% will be taught fully online.

Thus, the following guidelines shall apply to blended course offerings:

- Online and blended course offerings will be identified in the official schedule of classes. The schedule of classes will notify students whether such courses are synchronous or asynchronous and about any software and hardware requirements for participation in online class sessions. The program is responsible for indicating the mode of instruction when the course schedule is submitted.

- Online, blended, and standard course offerings will be consistent in terms of student learning outcomes, quality, assessment, and purpose with other courses bearing the same program and course number. Online or blended course offerings will meet all Curriculum Committee requirements.

- Students enrolled in online and blended classes will be given the same rights and responsibilities as students enrolled in standard course offerings.

**3. Delivering an E-Learning Course**

3.1. E-Learning Course Orientation

Policy

-**Written Assignment Requirements**

- Written work includes formal research papers, business writing, technical writing, and journal entries.
- All written work shall follow the guidelines for academic honesty, copyright, and intellectual property policies.

-**Attendance and Participation**

- Students' attendance for E-learning courses requires at least one posting to the course module per week. Two weeks of missed attendance creates an automatic drop of course, and the instructor will submit an Instructor Initiated Withdrawal to the Registrar's office.
- Participation is separate from attendance requirements, which requires students to follow participation rules as stated by the instructor in the course syllabus.
- Faculty participation and appropriate facilitation requires weekly posting of feedback to students

**4.0** -**Substitutions and Guest Lecturing**

Department chairs must approve guest lecturing and substitution for course facilitation in advance.

**Procedures**

- An E-learning environment course orientation should offer an overview of course components, instructional materials and technologies, and AUCA E-learning environment support resources. A well-structured orientation establishes the foundation and sets the tone for student-instructor communication for the entire semester. Develop an 'E-learning tools for Student Success' course to be offered each semester. This course will provide LMS tutorials, library resources, and basic trouble shooting skills.

**E-Learning Department and Faculty Communications**

Policy

- Undergraduate Studies is responsible for quality service-level Management for student learning. The E-learning Department and Faculty will ensure positive communications between student & faculty.

Procedures

- Given the physical and temporal separation between faculty and students, it is important to consider the methods of communication – student-faculty interaction and student-to-student interaction – that will be used in the course when developing lesson plans. Interaction may occur during faculty office hours, or it may take place via telephone, e-mail, electronic chats, on-site meetings, video teleconferencing, or other methods. Appropriate interaction for a course depends upon the course delivery mode and the technologies used by the faculty member.
- All courses should be prepared for the LMS before the course

**Student-Faculty Interaction/Communication with Students**

- **Feedback to student assignments** will be delivered in a timely fashion by the instructor. Research shows that any delay in returning feedback to students makes E-learning courses less effective. The longer the delay the less effective the course becomes. Online faculty should provide interaction between the student and faculty member on a regular basis. They should also respond to all submitted work within one week of submission. Failure to adequately follow this policy will result in a denial of the offending faculty member's right to offer future E-Learning courses for the University.
- **Grades for student progress** through the course will be posted a week after the assignment is due. All mid-term grades will be delivered to the Registrar according to the academic calendar.
- **Student Contact Hours** for courses will be determined according to the credit hours assigned to the course. Faculty will post availability for students in order to promote student-faculty interaction.

**Policy**

**Faculty Development**
- Faculty must maintain good standing for faculty development training. Facilitation of courses requires a current personal development plan (PDP), which must be on file with the Human Resources Department). Faculty are expected to provide student assessment of emerging E-learning tools and refer students to the E- Learning Department to learn about and master emerging E-learning teaching aids.

**First-Year Students**

- First-Year Students are required to attend the E-learning environment training during the first week of orientation. Students can attend on-going E-learning orientation throughout the semester.

**Procedures**

Faculty Development
- All new faculty will be provided with training on E-learning pedagogy and the teaching aids provided by AUCA.
- Refresher E-learning training will occur per faculty development plan on a quarterly basis. Department Chairs are responsible for providing meaningful and collaborative faculty development session for E- learning instruction.
- Faculty will promote student collaboration through means such as: discussion questions, learning team activities, and weekly participation using either asynchronous or synchronous technologies.

**E-Learning Environment**

Policy
- E-Learning faculty is strongly encouraged to use AUCA's approved LMS for any course online, hybrid/blended/web-enhanced.
- Student Code of Conduct-  Refer to the Student Handbook
- Faculty Code of Conduct-   Refer to the Faculty Handbook

**Faculty Academic Conduct**
- **Plagiarism**- Plagiarism intentional or non-intentional is not allowed. See Faculty Handbook.

- **Academic Honesty-** Faculty will monitor and guide student behavior, related work experience, assignment completion, and team work within course delivery to ensure positive and quality classroom interactions.
- **Content Development**
    - Faculty will generate and gather course content that follows the Copyright and TEACH Act (TEACH Act, 2002).
    - Faculty will cite all relevant sources for words, concepts, ideas from other authors that are utilized in the delivery of instruction.
    - Faculty will be responsible for submitting all assessment reports on time to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Procedures
- The E-Learning Department is responsible for posting training agendas, steps, and topics for student or faculty training sessions.

## Planning and Developing Your Online Course

Policy

- Organizing your online course is a critical step. Spend some time planning out your course outline and gather your materials and decide what resources you will be using. Faculty Dean and HOD must receive hard copy of a ready-made online course of every teacher.

Procedure: Elements to consider in the organized online course:

- **Introduction of the faculty and course**. This will be the get your student acquainted with the faculty and the structure of the course.
- **Announcements/Messages:** Post weekly messages to your students of reminders, task, assignments, and if any changes to the outline.
- **Faculty Contact Preference:** Share how you want your student to contact you. Your hours, time, and by email, chat, phone, text, etc… Be sure to be clear on the contact tool you will be using.
- **Syllabus:** You include the course syllabus in the course.
- **Discussion Forum:** Using discussion questions are essential in an online course. This resource can be used to introduce students to one another and address any interaction and communication needs.
- **Class Calendar:** Sharing important dates help students plan accordingly.
- **Assignments:** The Assignments feature of your online course allows students to electronically submit any assignments to you. You can specify the due date for assignment completion, provide instructions, etc. Once you grade the assignment, the grade will automatically be transferred to the Grade.
- **Quizzes:** Post quizzes or surveys. The grade received on a quiz will also show up in the Grade book.
- **Communication:** Communication with your students using the Forum, chat, email, or telepresence is needed in online learning.

- **E-Learning Department** {Or Faculty/Department in Charge}: Contact the department if you need help and support in your online course design.
- **Course Goals, Objectives and Timeline:** Post and share course expectations and objectives is necessary to the success of online learning. Students need to understand the expectations and timelines.

**Teaching Online and Delivery**

Policy

Outline some strategies that can assist you with facilitating online learning.

Procedures

- **Week One Before the Class Starts** – Send a welcome message. Contact the E-Learning Department for outline.
- **Introductions:** Ask student to introduce themselves. Using the Forum tool is a great option. This assignment which asks students to post a paragraph or two about themselves works great in the online environment (you could ask them to state their name, where they work, what they do, what their interests are, what they expect from the course, etc.). This assignment serves several purposes:
a) Students get to know each other,
b) it "breaks the ice,"
c) Students learn how to use some of the features of Moodle prior to the course beginning, and
d) Students have enough time to contact technical support before the course starts should they experience any technical difficulties.
- **Provide Feedback:** Online students can sometimes feel lost in the online environment. For many of them, your class will probably be the first educational experience online. To help them become better online learners, make sure you provide formative feedback on their progress. Skyhawk email is particularly useful for this.
- **Announce Upcoming Deadlines:** Just like in a regular classroom, it is a good idea to "announce" upcoming deadlines and ask students if they need further clarification of the assignment.

**Curricular Control**

**Rights and Responsibilities**

- The tenure track faculty has the right and responsibility to develop curricula and to establish general course content. All faculty possess the right to determine the instructional pedagogy in the courses that they are assigned within the given modality.
- Programs may opt to create residency requirements for faculty in regards to the number of courses and sections that may be taught off-campus and/or online; in regards to physical/virtual office hours; in regards to service.

**PROGRAM/Degrees/Credentials**

- All new programs and existing programs moving to or from online will undergo full review. Full review is currently: program, University Curriculum Committee, Academic Planning, Senate, and President. Additional external approvals as necessary--these currently include but are not limited to AUCA and the respective approvals.

- Full Review may be revised in accordance with the yet to be identified process after Academic Master Planning Revision that will apply to all programs.

**Module**

All Modules default to be taught in any modality unless specified as noted below.

If a Program wishes to limit the teaching modality of a module, a vote from the respective committees of AUCA. In the event that the proposed change does not receive a majority of votes, the course will remain open to all modalities. If the proposed change is agreed upon by t he majority of voting faculty then the course modality/modalities will be specified and communicated to the Curriculum Committee via the Course Modification Form (to reflect the wishes of the program and maintain a record of the modality decision).

**Course Approval**
Policy
- Same policy for traditional face-to-face courses. See Course Catalog Procedure.
- Same procedure for ground courses. See Course Catalog

**Cancellation of E-Learning Courses**

Policy
- Course offering and cancellation will be coordinated by the Registrar, the Undergraduate Studies, and E-Learning Department.

Procedures
- The Registrar will coordinate with the Academic Dean to review course enrollment. The Dean will decide on cancellation of courses.
- Cancellation will be executed by the Registrar's Office

**Module Sections**

Unless the program has limited the modality of a course (as described above) Chairs will identify the mode of instruction for individual sections (available for the specific course) after consulting with the assigned faculty. The modality for each section of a course shall be identified in the Schedule of Classes (per Senate policy 11-09).

Any decision by the Chair on modes of instruction shall address the following:

- Chairs will ensure faculty members are qualified to teach (prior experience, training, etc.) in the proposed course modality.
- Within the parameters of the CBA (article 12), chairs shall ensure that changes to the mode of delivery do not work against current faculty. (motion)

**Intellectual Property**

Faculty members teaching blended and online courses have the same control and ownership of the substantive and intellectual content of their courses that faculty have with any other course. Faculty wishing to maintain control of their intellectual property as a result of extraordinary university support to change the content delivery modality must do so in writing prior to initiating a University contract as a special consultant. Extraordinary support does not include a stipend or reassigned time for creating a new, or converting face to face courses to, an online or blended modality. (Pending reconciliation of senate and university policy.)

However, according to the current CI University Policy on Intellectual Property, "If the University initiates a creative project, solicits voluntary faculty participation in the project, and provides funding for the project, possibly including compensation/reassigned time for the faculty member, the University will own the intellectual property rights developed through the project unless the University agrees to share ownership." (AA.01.002)

**Academic Integrity and Student Originality of Course Work**

Policy

Online programs and courses present new challenges to ensure academic integrity that should be addressed in their design. Online programs and courses will conform to University policies on academic integrity. Senate Policy (13-06)
AUCA's E-Learning Department and Director assists and supports faculty in ensuring original student work is submitted by the student through identification of students via student E-learning profiles.

Procedures

- Student Profiles
  - The E-Learning Department helps students create a valid E- learning profile complete with a student identification number, student identification card photo, and verification of registered courses.

- Submission of Original Work
  - The E-Learning Department helps students upload original work.
- Faculty regularly monitors submission of work. Such work should include verification of the student signature block, patterns of writing styles, and student interaction styles
- Faculty are responsible for checking for plagiarism or substitution of work via tool sets and patterns of work by students.
- Proctoring of Course Exams
  - In order to ensure student identities, faculties are encouraged to use exam proctoring whenever possible or feasible.
  - The E-Learning Department or faculty and staff at Gishushsu instructional sites assist students and faculty in the proctoring of exams and any special remote summative activities.
  - Proctors monitor student identification at time of test by verifying that the Student Identification card with name, Student ID number, and picture confirm that the student is doing the work of the exam.
- Authentication
  - Students must complete their own tests/exams/quizzes given online. Failure to do their own work will result in a student receiving a letter grade of "F" for that course.
  - Any student found to have used any kind of identification fraud in an online course where they are not the one doing the required work and sign-up for courses will automatically be dismissed from Adventist university of Central Africa.
  - The E-Learning Department and Webmaster will set up a secondary identification question for each student that they must use at Registration to ensure their identity.
  - Faculty are encouraged to verify student identities through techniques such as a requirement in the syllabus to use electronic cameras for discussions, at least on a random basis, phone calls to students, and paying close attention to the quality and style of communications with faculty.
  - Assessment is a key authentication tool. According to the HEC, the following assessment tools are used by universities in AUCA:
  - Faculty should use these assessment tools as part of their student verification process.

**Assessment Tools as part Student Verification Process**

| Responses | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Homework assignments | 655 | 20% |
| Online tests and/or quizzes | 606 | 19% |
| Bulletin-board postings | 547 | 17% |
| Projects/papers | 494 | 15% |
| Participation in chat room | 313 | 10% |
| Proctored tests and/or quizzes | 234 | 7% |
| Team projects | 149 | 5% |
| Reflective journal | 92 | 3% |
| Student portfolio | 79 | 2% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Other | 31 | **1%** |
| **Total** | **3,200** | |

**Use of Outside Contractors**

- No individual <mark>or program shall agree in a contract with any private or public entity to deliver entire courses or Programs on behalf of CI without prior university approval.</mark> The University will not enter into a contract with any private or public entity to deliver courses or Programs without the prior approval of the relevant program faculty. Where no program yet exists, Senate approval is required (friendly amendment).

**Course Enrollment Limits: as done in face to face…**

Course caps for online courses should be consistent with face-to-face classes.

- As a University centered on student learning we recognize the importance of faculty-student interactions in learning. For this reason, the <u>CSU Course Classification System</u> should be referenced as the guidelines for setting course enrollment caps and faculty workload for all courses in any modality. <mark>Benchmark enrollments on course approval forms should be considered enrollment caps no matter the mode of instruction until a course cap policy is created. Changes to course enrollment caps will go to the appro</mark>priate Curriculum Committee for approval.

**Accessibility**

All modules shall comply with Rwanda Disabilities policy to address students with disabilities.

Faculty should <mark>include the currently recommended</mark> Disability Statement for syllabi.

**9. Faculty Support**

The University recognizes that not all faculty are prepared for the challenges and opportunities that teaching and learning in an online environment can present. To assist faculty in creating high quality learning environments online, the Teaching and Learning Innovation Program, and Academic <mark>Technology provides education, training, technology support, and instructional design services. Faculty are encouraged to access these resources before moving into teaching in an online learning environment</mark>.

Chairs will ensure faculty members are qualified to teach (prior experience, training, etc.) in the proposed course modality. Programs may further create internal policies that require faculty are prepared to teach in an online or blended environment.

**Student Support**

- The University recognizes that not all students are prepared for the challenges and opportunities that teaching and learning in an online environment can present. Students are encouraged to access the Help Desk for technical assistance in their classes. Each student in an online class, course or program shall be informed by the instructor prior to or on the first day of class of available ==instructional support, student services, library resources, technology support, support services for students with disabilities and technical requirements (hardware, internet, etc….) for each course== section.

  Students should be informed via the Schedule of Classes about the mode of instruction (SP12-08).

## E-Learning Development & Support

Policy
- The E-Learning Department will assist the university in the development and support of course modules.

Procedures

Registration of Students
- Validate student accounts and permissions
- Coordinate with Registrar's Office to add students to online class offerings based on student program requirements

Student Ongoing Support
- Ensure understanding of Weekly Schedule
- Ensure understanding of the E-Learning Module Resources. Student-Faculty Contact
- Course syllabi are created by faculty and maintained by Instructional Services. Faculty are to create course syllabi per requirements set by the Instructional Services and the Curriculum Committee. Students are to refer to course syllabus for course requirements, conditions and contact information.
- Faculty contact information will also be placed in the learning management system.

## Instructional Development Training, Training Opportunities, and Services
Policy
## Learning/Content Management System
- Faculty will receive regular training for proficient delivery and management of course modules.

## Real-Time E-Learning Collaboration Tools
- Faculty will receive regular training for proficient management and facilitation of real-time student-faculty interaction. Design and Delivery training will be offered to faculty teaching online using our resources available.

## Faculty & Student Training & Interaction
- Faculty and students will receive regular training for efficient use of real-time student-faculty interaction services.

**Post-Production E-Learning Lecture Tools**
- Faculty will receive regular training for proficient delivery and management of asynchronous and synchronous course content.

**6.1 New Faculty E-Learning Environment Orientation**

Policy

- AUCA Faculty will be provided resources and information regarding E- learning LMS delivery.
  - Syllabus
  - Course outline
  - Book resources
  - Pertinent Course Information/Resources

Procedures

- Faculty new to E-learning environment will receive training givenby the ELearning Director or facilitator as directed by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
- Adjunct faculty located away from NTU's campuses or instructional sites may have this requirement waived by the E- Learning Department if they have prior teaching experience using LMS systems. If they have not had LMS experience theE-Learning.
- E-learning Department will be responsible for ensuring they receive such training before teaching an online course.
- Upon completion of the training, a certificate will be issued to the faculty member, indicating that he or she is qualified to teach an online course.

**Technology Support**

Policy

- AUCA's E-Learning Department assists and supports faculty in the design, implementation, and support for E-Learning courses. The E- Learning Director is the liaison between students, the Undergraduate Studies Department, and IT support staff. It is the incumbent's responsibility to ensure faculty and students are supported in their efforts to deliver effective E-Learning courses and programs. The E-Learning Director collaborates with the IT Director to develop requirements/expectations for E-learning systems.
- Faculty must own the technology and have adequate Internet access if they are not working for the University at its main campus or the instructional sites.

Procedures

- Design

- The E-Learning department assists in course development, the online upload of content, placement of content and on-going management of course modules.
- Implementation
  - Course offerings and course cancellations will be coordinated by the Registrar, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and E-Learning Director.
- Support
  - Management and coordination of course offerings is performed in conjunction with faculty and student resource requirements.

## Evaluation and Assessment

## Course and Program Assessment

- Courses and programs should be held to the same standard regardless of the mode of instruction. Assessment of online and blended courses should be a regular part of the department's assessment plan. Assessment should be focused on student outcomes.

  Claver: But how do we assess practically?? Can we include, apart from just exams, other methods of assessment? Ex. Portfolio, assignment—individual or groups…

## Faculty Assessment

- The CBA, campus policies, and program guidelines establish faculty observation and evaluation procedures. Academic program faculty assume responsibility over and exercise oversight of courses and their curriculum ensuring the quality, rigor, and integrity of instruction. Instruction online whether fully online or blended should match the quality, rigor and integrity of face-to-face courses. Campus and department faculty performance evaluation processes should recognize online and face-to-face instructional activities as equally meritorious and important.

- Policies governing RTP and Lecturer Evaluations shall be followed for all courses (*An example of a Teaching Observation instrument/rubric will be available on the Teaching Innovations website and in the Appendix.*). Access to online course content is governed by the same procedures and restrictions that determine evaluator access to face-to-face courses. This includes the CBA requirement faculty be notified at least 5 days in advance of a visit to their course. The faculty member shall maintain reasonable control over the extent of this access to their course materials and content.

## Assessment of Student Learning

- Criteria for student success in online instruction courses and programs shall be as rigorous and comprehensive as those used in classroom-based courses and these criteria shall be clearly communicated to students.

## Student Evaluations of Faculty

- All class sections both stateside and through Extended University, regardless of teaching modality, will adhere to the current Senate Policy on student evaluations of teaching. Administration will follow the current.

**Online Evaluation/Assessment**

Policy

- The Department Chair of the school to which the E-learning course and/or program belongs will conduct faculty evaluations based on the schedule provided by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
- The E-Learning department and online faculty will send out Online Assessment Exercise to students.

Procedures

- All faculty are required, as part of their normal duties, to assess their students, meeting the objectives of the University's Assessment Plan produced and approved by the Assessment Committee and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies
- AUCA's E-Assessment policy outlines the minimum requirements that the University expects to be met when delivering summative and formative assessment electronically. The requirements of the policy are in addition to normal University policies, procedures and regulations relating to assessment.
- E-Assessment may be used for formative or summative purposes. o All staff members involved in the E-Assessment process must be familiar with the online environment and have attended the appropriate AUCA training course prior to gaining access to the system.
- The AUCA Assessment committee is responsible for ensuring that E Assessment does not compromise the assessment methodology and the integrity of what is being assessed. o Students will fill out an Online Student Readiness Quiz at (AUCA E-Learning Webpage)

**Online, Hybrid/Blended Course Credit Hour Assignment**

Policy

- AUCA online and hybrid/blended course hour are assigned based on the guidelines below and meeting the HLC Policy: Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition- Number: FDCR.A.10.020.

Procedures

- **Hybrid/Blended Courses:** Courses offered in a blended format with 1 or more on site face-to-face class sessions and at least one or more online sessions, both containing direct interaction with a faculty member. Contact time is assessed using both on–site definitions (for the on-site portion) and online definitions as above (for the online portion). In all such instances, these courses must meet total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered online or asynchronously.

- **Online Courses:** Courses offered entirely online without any on-site face-to face meetings. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard lecture/seminar course with an alternative delivery method. Contact time is satisfied by several means which can include but is not limited to, the following:
    a. Regular instruction or interaction with a faculty member once a week for each week the course runs.
    b. Academic engagement through interactive tutorials, group discussions moderated by faculty, virtual study/project groups, engaging with class peers and computer tutorials graded and reviewed by faculty. In all such instances, these courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered online or asynchronously. Instructional time can be estimated using the faculty's educated calculation of how much time would be sufficient to achieve satisfactory progress toward learning outcomes on the following activities:
- Reading, viewing or listening to course presentations
- Reading other course materials
- Participation in course interactions (discussions via text, audio, or video)
- Conducting research as part of the class
- Completing class assignments, projects or other assessment activities This can be accomplished by a faculty member breaking down course activities ahead of the start of the course and provide details regarding specific items and estimated completion time. Throughout the course students can be surveyed to assure the estimates are accurate or corrections can be made for the remainder of the course as well as the next time it's offered. Hybrid/Blended Courses: Courses offered in a blended format with 1 or more on site face-to-face class sessions and at least one or more online sessions, both containing direct interaction with a faculty member. Contact - 18 - time is assessed using both on–site definitions (for the on-site portion) and online definitions as above (for the online portion). In all such instances, these courses must meet total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered online or asynchronously.

**E-Learning Expectations**
Communications
- Students are responsible for ensuring that they have the minimum technology requirements to complete online courses, including access to a computer and printer and not less than a DSL Internet connection. Students may check with the E-Learning Department to ensure that they have access to accessible technology.
- Students and faculty will answer all forms of communications in a timely fashion. Faculty must communicate with students in the time of instructor's absence.

Assignments and Feedback
- Faculty will post assignment content and due dates the first class day of the workweek.
- Students will post assignments on time according to posted due dates.
- Faculty will post weekly feedback to students within 7 days of assignment due date.
- Instructor will follow-up with students no later than 24 hours of first initial student-faculty communication.

**E-Learning Administrative Policy**

**5.1 Office Hours**
Policy
- Department hours for administrative needs are between 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday

Procedures
- The E-learning Department will address any concerns or issues in a timely fashion, except on weekends and holidays.

**Online Education Committee**

Policy

- The Online Education Committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Faculty Assembly, appointed annually by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. One member of the Committee shall be the E-Learning Director. The Online Education Committee shall have the following functions:

Procedure

- Review and recommend changes to the online education policies and procedures as deemed necessary.
- Review the course syllabi of online courses and recommend changes as deemed necessary.