



We are delighted to have you join our academic community. As a member of our faculty and expert in your discipline, your instruction and guidance are critical to UT Tyler's mission. As you embark on this exciting journey, we want to ensure you have all the necessary information at your fingertips to thrive in your role.

Reference this handbook for resources available to online instructors. If you have any questions about or suggestions for the policies and practices included, please reach out and let us know. We are excited to partner with you in pursuit of UT Tyler's mission and support of student success.

Once again, welcome to our academic family. We look forward to witnessing your accomplishments and supporting your pursuit of excellence.

Dr. Poonam Kumar

Associate Provost for Online and Continuing Education

Scott Dillingham

Executive Director, Office of Digital Learning





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Special thanks
to Stephen
Myers for
leading the
creation of
this handbook



Required Certification

Following SACSCOC requirements, UT Tyler requires a certificate of training for online instruction. UT Tyler offers a fully online, self-paced course that will fulfill the requirement of a certified online instructor for three years; look for an invitation in your UT Tyler e-mail. This four-module course serves as a springboard for every instructor as they teach online at UT Tyler. Informed by best practices outlined by Quality Matters, it provides pedagogy and best practices for online courses and will help you get started with a course you are currently constructing. Alternatively, any nationally recognized certification or training earned in the past three years that your department chair accepts also satisfies this requirement.

At its core, teaching online utilizes many of the same best practices in higher-ed pedagogy but adds a layer of complexity and opportunity, given its medium. All instructors should create engaging content, craft relevant learning experiences, communicate effectively with students and assess student learning. The online environment provides both opportunities and constraints to each of these activities. Here are some online pedagogical practices to consider:

COURSE FORMAT

Without the standard weekly meetings face-to-face classes are based on, the online environment enables instructors to establish unique course structures. However, the best online courses have consistent and modular formats that guide students through the content, activities and assessments. Consider crafting self-paced pathways for students to self-progress through the course using the "next" button at the bottom of each page. If utilizing group work, separate students into Canvas groups and clarify roles for each cohort.

The most common structure for online courses here at UT Tyler is week-by-week; this groups all course content into a specific week in which it is to be accomplished. The entire week's materials and assignments should be reviewed and completed at a consistent, particular time each week. This keeps students on pace with each other and allows structure for the instructor to give feedback and grade assignments. Without having students in person to ask questions and give us immediate feedback on what is and is not working in the course, a clear, consistent and verbalized structure can help regulate student expectations and facilitate good communication.

INSTRUCTOR PRESENCE

Students are more engaged when you are more visible and active in the course. Be visually present by allowing students to see your face in posts, videos and online meetings. Guide your students as they learn by communicating regularly, participating in discussions and initiating one-on-one communication with each student. Be socially present and connect with students as real humans with interests, preferences and ideas. These actions build trust and credibility as their instructor. While your credentials and experience do add to the reputability of your first impression, over time, each student will weigh this impression against your presence throughout the course. So, be intentional, make connections with your students and throw yourself out there by being present in this online space.

ESTABLISH TIME & COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Expectations set at the beginning of the course will guide students from week to week. Consider clarifying how much time students should budget in their schedules to complete their work each week.

Select and communicate a medium in which you will communicate with your students and the frequency of its use. Rather than assuming email as a primary method, consider that all students could benefit from your answers to questions that a student asked privately; a question discussion board might facilitate better communication as it can be seen by everyone and in one place. Prioritizing discussion boards and other Canvas communication tools can be more efficient and accessible than traditional ones in an online course. Communicating these methods to students up front increases the chances that they will participate and be engaged.



COURSE OBJECTIVES

While teaching online does have unique characteristics, developing an online course starts in the same way as a face-to-face course: with goals. As you begin this process, consider starting by crafting course objectives. Learning objectives are concrete goals for all the learning that will take place in the course. Not only do these statements give an aligned purpose to each of your instructional materials, learning activities and assessments, but they also provide the student with specific deliverables so they can synthesize their efforts. The next section will go into further detail on how to get your course design started.

CREATING ENGAGING CONTENT

Having varied, memorable and relevant content is the best way to increase student engagement. One of the advantages of an online class is the ability to reference and utilize myriad sources of information directly into the course experience. In addition to your textbook, curate additional materials for your course like recent news articles, YouTube videos, interactive websites, etc. Great learning activities could be as passive as watching a video or as active as writing a thesis. Ideally, these activities should sequence together with increasing difficulty, enabling the student to meet the course objective by the end of the semester. Creating measurable learning objectives is a great first step in developing engaging content.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Integrate frequent, low-stakes formative assessments into your teaching methodology and provide students with ongoing opportunities to gauge their understanding of course content without penalties. Consider adding practice quizzes, short reflections or public polls to gain insight into each student's progress, enabling timely and targeted feedback to address individual needs. As a result, students are more likely to stay on track, develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter and retain knowledge in the long term.

Textbook Selection

For many instructors, selecting a textbook is often step one for developing a course. Consult with your department chair or admin to determine if textbooks have already been chosen for your upcoming course load.

The library provides many free, e-book versions of the textbooks selected from previous semesters and is continuously updating that list. Be sure to look and see if the library is offering a free digital version of the book you have selected at libguides.uttyler.edu/textbooks.

In future semesters, instructors may submit their selections to the bookstore through aip.bncollege.com.

Open educational resources are another great option to provide no-cost textbooks to students. OER are texts which can be retained, reused, revised, remixed and redistributed for free as part of their license. These texts allow for modifications and transformations to suit anyone's needs. The university has included OER adoption in its strategic plan and offers stipends for instructors who use OER as their official text. If you are interested in adopting OER for your class visit libguides.uttyler.edu/oer or contact your librarian.

If you intend to use a textbook that you have authored, please ensure that you fill out the following form and submit it to the provost in accordance with Series 31004, Section 7 of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents for government of The University of Texas System. This form can be found at. uttyler.edu/academic-affairs/files/facultyauthoredtexts.pdf.



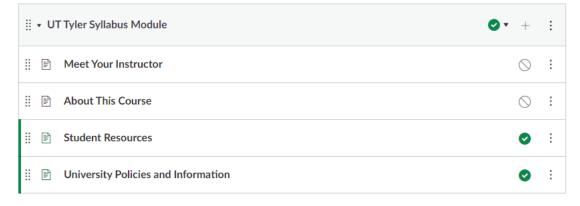
Canvas Templates

CANVAS SHELL



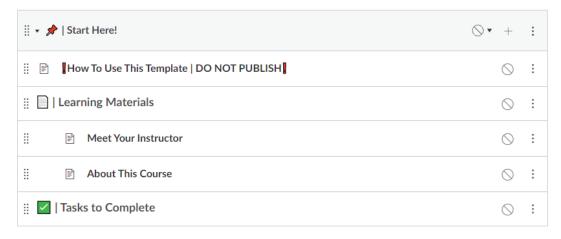
Each semester, a new Canvas course shell is generated for your upcoming courses. This shell will assist you in quickly setting up your Canvas classes. It comes pre-populated with a template, although using the template is optional. You can design and set up your course according to your preferences.

UT TYLER SYLLABUS MODULE



Within your course, you will find the "UT Tyler Syllabus Module" located under the "Modules" tab. This module includes several pages to assist you in developing your syllabus and provides student resources and university policies.

START HERE MODULE TEMPLATE



Included under the "Modules" tab is the "Start Here" module.
These modules and their respective pages can be customized to align with your course content. You have the flexibility to replace images and edit most of the text.

For detailed instructions on how to utilize and personalize this template, please refer to the "How To Use This Template" section within the "Start Here" module.

Instructional Design Support

The Instructional Design team seeks to ignite, innovate and inspire learning experiences in face-to-face, hybrid and online courses. We partner with The University of Texas at Tyler faculty to improve and design high-impact learning experiences. Each member of the team is Quality Matters certified and is looking to collaborate with you on course design, pedagogy, best practices and technology to create and deliver an effective face-to-face, hybrid and/or online course.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN CONSULTATION

Whether you are developing a course from scratch or reimagining a singular assignment, book a consultation with a member of our ID team. Together, we will brainstorm ideas and explore the best strategies for creating and delivering engaging face-to-face, hybrid and online courses. Consider meeting with us to talk about:

NEW COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Let our instructional designers guide you in developing well-structured and engaging courses. We will collaborate with you to design course materials, organize content, create multimedia resources and implement interactive elements that promote student engagement and learning.

COURSE ALIGNMENT & OBJECTIVES

Ensure alignment between your course goals, learning objectives, assessments, content and technologies. We will work closely with you to create a cohesive and effective learning experience that prepares students for long-term success.

ONLINE COURSE REVIEW

Enlist an instructional designer to review and make holistic recommendations for your online course. With each of our IDs being certified in Quality Matters, we can weigh in on online best practices and standards for your course. We developed an online course review guide that you can utilize with us or one of your colleagues. Download the guide at uttyler.edu/digital-learning/instructional-design/.

TRANSFORMING YOUR FACE-TO-FACE COURSE TO ONLINE

Discover how to leverage your current class in an online learning space. Our ID team can provide guidance on integrating educational technologies, such as interactive tools, multimedia resources and online pedagogy, to create an interactive and dynamic learning experience.

ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure your courses are accessible to all students by conducting a thorough course accessibility review. We will help you make your content and instructional materials accessible to students with disabilities, ensuring equal access and an inclusive learning environment.

CONTACT

Contact our Instructional Design team at **digitallearning@uttyler.edu** or **903.566.6200** to take advantage of our services. Our team of instructional designers, each with their areas of expertise, is ready to assist you.







COURSE POPULATION/DEV SHELLS

Courses will populate in Canvas 24 to 48 hours after the first student enrolls in the course in myUTTyler. If you are listed as the instructor of record in myUTTyler, you will see the course in your Canvas account after it populates. If no students have enrolled in the course and you want a blank shell to get started building the course in Canvas, you can email canvas@uttyler.edu to request a DEV shell. You can build the course in this shell and then import the content into the live course when this populates into Canvas. You can also use the DEV shell to make changes to the course throughout the semester without causing issues in the course with students in it. To import the content from the DEV shell into the live shell, access the Canvas Community for instructions at community.canvaslms.com.

CROSS-LISTING

If you have multiple sections that you would like merged, you can request to have the additional sections cross-listed into the main section you want to teach in. To have your sections cross-listed in Canvas, please complete the form at **forms.office.com/r/uhJS8ZzQqL** with your request.

When filling out the form, please ensure that you include the course name, number and section, for example, UNIV-1000.001.

CONTENT DUPLICATION

When starting a new semester, you can import content from your old course or your DEV shell into the new semester course. To import the content, go into the new course, go to settings and click "Import Course Content." From the drop-down menu on this page, you will select "Copy a Canvas Course," then select the course you want the content from in the next drop-down menu, click next to "All Content" or "Specific Content" and then click "Import." The Canvas Community contains guides showing these steps at community.canvaslms.com.

SYLLABUS STANDARDS

A syllabus is an agreement between you and your learners. It contains what a student must do and the timeline of tasks to complete the course. While this document is required by the university as expressed in HOP 3.4.7., its inclusion in the course protects both you and your students from arbitrary or untimely changes in course requirements and due dates.

While your department may provide syllabi for your course from previous instructors, it is your responsibility to personalize it for each course section for which you are responsible. You can find boilerplate syllabus policy language at **uttyler.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-resources** or use the template syllabus module included in every Canvas course at UT Tyler.

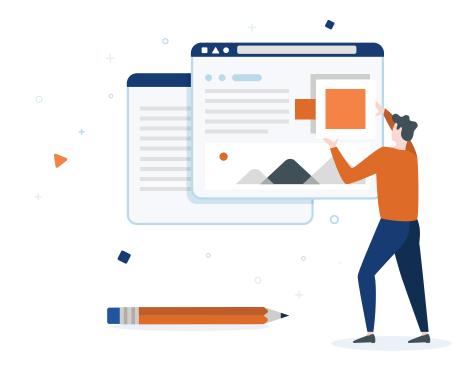
Instructor name, office, phone and email contact 1. 2. Office hours (three hours minimum per week, plus by appointment) 3. TA contact (if appropriate) 4. Course overview 5. Student learning outcomes 6. Required textbooks and readings and recommendations (if applicable) 7. Special course notes (e.g., external websites or required resources, proctoring requirements, field trips, etc.) 8. Assignments with weights/point values and grading scales. Brief descriptions of significant assignments are required 9. Late work and make-up exam expectations 10. Attendance policy (optional) 11. Calendar of topics, readings and due dates

PUBLISHING YOUR COURSE

Course Status



Once your course is ready for students, you will need to publish the course in Canvas. You can publish your course from the home page. On the right-hand side of the home page, click on the "Publish" button, which will turn green, letting you know that it has been published. There is also a course release date for when the course will be available for students. You can view the start and end date for the course under settings in the course. Courses should be published by the first day of class in accordance with the university calendar.





STUDENT COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Between texts, email, social media and Canvas, selecting the medium in which you will communicate with your students, and the frequency of its use, is more of a matter of personal preference than instructional design. Ultimately, it is up to you, the instructor, to set and communicate the expectations on which communication medium to use and when. It is incorrect to assume that students check their emails as often as we do or call us directly when there is a major issue. It is up to you to lead them by clarifying which medium to use and when.

For an online course, quick response time is key; consider specifying one or all of the following policies:

- 24-hour response time can be expected on emails throughout the work week. Weekend emails will only be available at specific times.
- Office hours are only held virtually by appointment.
- Questions about course content should be asked on an open forum or discussion board in the course so that every student can gain the benefit of your diligent responses.

OFFICE HOURS

Faculty should post a schedule of regular office hours that is convenient for students and meets departmental requirements. Faculty are expected to be available at the times indicated. Online students are not able to come to campus to attend office hours. Therefore, chat, email, phone, video or some other synchronous tool should be used. Additional virtual office hours can be arranged by appointment. If office hours are canceled, students should be provided advance notice with instructions on how to contact the faculty member if needed.

CENSUS DATE/FINANCIAL REPORTING DATE

The census date is the day course enrollments are finalized and certified to the State of Texas for funding and other reporting purposes. Students should be aware that the census date is also the deadline for many forms and functions relevant to them. Census date information is available in the brochures published each term by the Office of the Registrar, and the specific date for each term can be found online at **uttyler.edu/academics/academic-calendar/**.

GRADE REPORTING & PASSBACK

Grading should be reported to myUTTyler for midterm and final grades. An email is sent from the Office of the Registrar with instructions and dates for midterm and final grade reporting. There is an option to import the Canvas grades into myUTTyler for ease of viewing, but the official grade will still need to be manually entered into the roster. Then the roster must be set to "Approved" and then saved to complete the process.

INCOMPLETE PROCESS

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an "Incomplete" for the course. An "I" may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course:
- (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or the final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor
- (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an "Incomplete" will not be used to calculate the grade point average for a student.

The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to complete all the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has not been assigned within one year, then the "I" will be changed to an "F" or to "NC" if the course was originally taken under the "CR"/"NC" grading basis.

Once the "I" is set up, the Office of Digital Learning can extend the access for the student in Canvas. Email **canvas@uttyler.edu** with the name of the course, the name of the student and the end date.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students complete course evaluations at the end of each term through myUTTyler. Each student has the opportunity to submit an evaluation for each of their courses. Faculty can download course evaluation reports and the schedule of when evaluations open and close at **uttyler.edu/information-analysis/course-eval-info/**.



CANVAS SUPPORT



We offer 24-hour support through Canvas. In the global navigation on the left, you can click "Help" to receive assistance and technical support on using the Canvas platform. They help through different channels like email, chat or phone, 24/7. This support is available to students and faculty alike.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TOOLS

In Canvas, there are two academic integrity tools available to help prevent cheating and ensure test integrity.

UNICHECK is a plagiarism detection software that identifies similarities between texts, ensuring academic integrity and originality. It compares submitted written content against a vast database of sources to detect potential instances of plagiarism.

PROCTORU is an online proctoring service that verifies the identity of test-takers and monitors their activities during high-stakes online exams. They offer two testing modes: "Auto" and "Live." In "Auto," ProctorU utilizes advanced monitoring technology to observe test-takers remotely and enforce exam rules. ProctorU staff review the flags and alert faculty to suspected academic integrity incidents. In "Live," ProctorU employs live proctors in addition to their automated monitoring technology. Given that this service may require a fee from the student (in late or rescheduling instances) and has less flexibility within the testing window, "Auto" exams may be advantageous in many situations. NOTE: Fees associated with ProctorU exams are paid through departmental funds. Check with your chair or dean concerning available funding.

For more information on these services as well as guides to provide your students, visit our website at **uttyler.edu/digital-learning/faculty-resources/**.

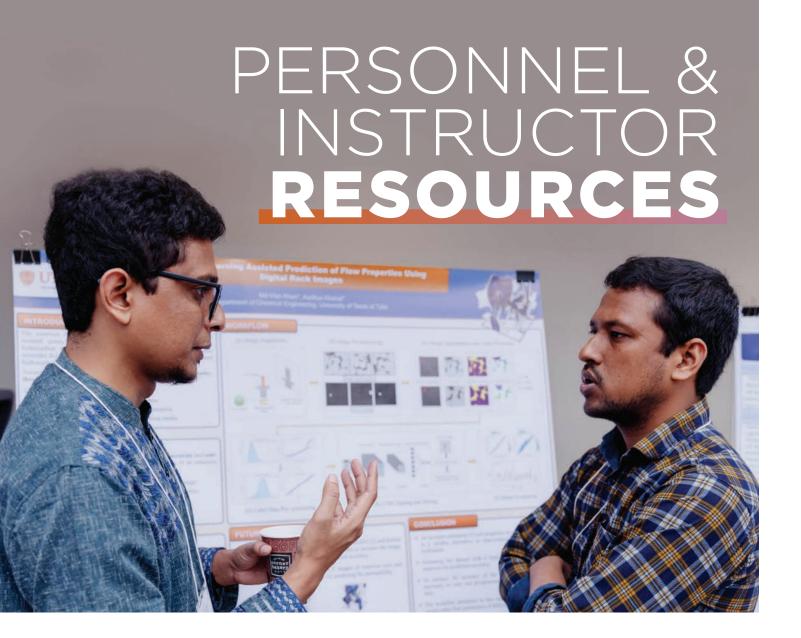
VIDEO CONFERENCING

ZOOM is integrated directly into Canvas and provides consistent video conferencing links to you and your students. Zoom automatically places an invitation on the student's Canvas course calendar when a meeting is scheduled through Canvas.

MICROSOFT TEAMS is available as well, but is primarily used for faculty and staff communication.

ADDING NEW INTEGRATIONS

There are other useful integrations in Canvas that we have not listed here as they are often discipline- or course-specific. If you would like to add an integration to your Canvas course, there is a process that must be followed to vet and approve these add-ons, as they must adhere to FERPA and data security requirements. The Office of Digital Learning can help through the Learning Systems Integration Request form at uttyler.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eJNcJMc5OYz1CO6.



CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING & LEARNING

The CETL provides workshops, keynotes and professional learning communities to faculty throughout the year. Visit **uttyler.edu/cetl** to learn more.

THE OFFICE OF DIGITAL LEARNING

The Office of Digital Learning supports all faculty in delivering their online, hybrid and face-to-face courses. The team consists of two major areas of focus: Learning Systems Support and Instructional Design. Visit our website at **uttyler.edu/digital-learning** for a detailed description of the team.

The Learning Systems Support team includes our LMS administrator, learning technologies analyst and two support specialists who work alongside faculty and staff to support the learning, collaboration and academic integrity platforms used across the university.

The Instructional Design team includes an instructional designer who creates engaging learning experiences across modalities and an instructional design associate who focuses on course design and user experience across digital learning platforms. All team members are QM certified and highly collaborative to ensure your courses excel in standards, practices and guidelines set by UT Tyler, SACSCOC and any federal guidelines.





LEARNING SYSTEMS

Our team includes support specialists who work with specific college faculty, programs and departments to serve digital learning needs and provide support, ideas and collaboration. Canvas support includes enrollment and user presence, system functionality, integration, user experience, and system modification and tuning for all faculty and students.



INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Instructional designers provide both pedagogical and technological course and program support. This includes resource repositories for faculty, course design templates and starter course shells, website resources including badges and online credentialing, and online/on-demand programs and workshops to address specific course, program and department needs.



Online Course Technical Assistance

Testing Platforms, Instructional Tools and Software

Participate in Developing Faculty
Support Resources

One-on-One Faculty Support

New Course Development

Course Alignment and Objectives

Online Course Review

Transforming Your Face-to-Face
Course to Online

Accessibility

LIBRARY

The Robert R. Muntz Library and Wise Medical Research Library match librarians to our academic disciplines for resource and database recommendations. They also assist students in their research related to your course. Visit **uttyler.edu/library** and **uthct.edu/wise-medical-research-library** for all your research needs.

IT HELP DESK

Technology Support assists faculty, staff and students with login access, email, UT Share, myUTTyler, computer trouble, software, hardware, on-campus internet and more. Access the Help Desk at uttyler.edu/technology-support.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability Services can provide recommendations on making your course inclusive to students with disabilities and information on student accommodations. Visit our website at **uttyler.edu/disability-services**.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

When facing any issues with student conduct or academic dishonesty, contact Student Conduct and Intervention at **uttyler.edu/sci/student-conduct**.

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

From registration to graduation, the Office of the Registrar is the heart of information about procedures, processes and more related to attending The University of Texas at Tyler. Find the information you need at **uttyler.edu/admissions/registrar**.

24-HOUR CANVAS SUPPORT

Canvas Support is available 24/7/365 for faculty and students through the Help Button in Canvas. You can chat or call Canvas Support for assistance.



ONLINE INSTRUCTO **POLICIES**

The Handbook of Operating Procedures is available online at uttyler.edu/hop and provides an exhaustive list of policies relevant to faculty, staff and students. In this section, we highlight policies related to online and hybrid courses:

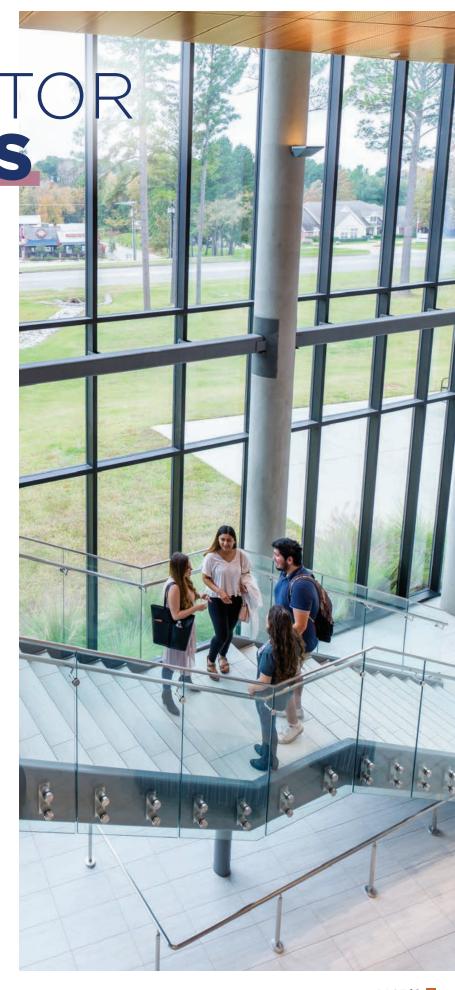
DEFINING HYBRID COURSES

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board defines online courses as a course in which 100% of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations (Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter J, Rule §2.202). A hybrid course is defined as a course in which more than 50% but less than 100% of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations. Visit texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\$ext.

viewtac for more information.

ONLINE TEACHING CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

In addition to meeting the standards for teaching in their field, instructors of online and hybrid courses must complete appropriate training for teaching in the online environment. UT Tyler instructors must obtain a certificate of training every three years. An Online Teaching Certification course is available in Canvas, which satisfies this requirement. Additionally, any nationally recognized certification obtained in the past three years (such as Quality Matters) that the department chair accepts will satisfy this requirement.



ONLINE COURSE QUALITY & VIGOR

Online and hybrid courses should have the same standards, including learning outcomes and descriptions, as face-to-face courses to ensure the same quality and rigor. Additionally, online and hybrid courses must provide regular and substantive interactions with students throughout the course (maintain office hours, post weekly announcements, provide ongoing feedback, etc.). Student interaction with the instructor should not be primarily initiated by the student, and the course should not be self-paced. THECB provides additional guidance on principles of Good Practice at https://reportcenter.highered. texas.gov/agency-publication/miscellaneous/ principles-of-good-practice-for-academic-degreeand-certificate-programs-and-credit-courses-offeredat-a-distance-2023/.

INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Online and hybrid courses must contain certain communication, feedback and engagement practices as defined by the U.S. Department of Education:

- The course must include at least two forms of substantive interaction such as direct instruction, feedback on a student's coursework, and group discussions related to the course and expected competencies.
- Interaction between the instructor and student is regular: opportunities happen on a predictable and scheduled basis, and the student's academic engagement and success are monitored and promptly addressed.
- More details on definitions and rules can be found on their website at ecfr.gov/current/ title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-600/ subpart-A/section-600.2.

THE FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

FERPA and The University of Texas System Rule 183 govern the maintenance of FERPA records. An overview of these policies can be found in HOP 5.2.3. Online instructors should use the university's learning management system (Canvas) to host course material and student submissions to meet FERPA and UTS 183 guidance. Grades should be maintained in Canvas for student privacy and to further comply with all FERPA requirements.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Office of Digital Learning and Disability Services Office can help ensure all courses are accessible and in compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide equal access to course materials for all students. The Disability Services Office notifies instructors of student accessibility requests and provides guidance on statutory requirements. The Office of Digital Learning can help with online course compliance through technical guidance and training. More about the university's accessibility policy can be found in the Handbook of Operating Procedures section 5.14.1.



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Regent Rule 90101 (referenced below) and Handbook of Operating Procedures 2.3.2 govern the rights to intellectual property and copyright for students and employees of the university. Much of the Board of Regents' rules on intellectual property deal with research and patents, but some regulations apply to instructors as well. Here are a few sections of Rule 90101 that apply directly to instructors and their students:

SEC. 3

As an employee of UT Tyler and thus UT System, any creation of intellectual property under the course and

scope of that employment is considered property of the Board of Regents.

SEC. 6

Students, on the other hand, are not subject to the Board of Regents' ownership unless:

- The student is also an employee or contractor whose work is a result of that employment
- The student participates in research already committed to or encumbered by an existing agreement
- The student jointly creates the property with a non-student

SEC. 7

The Board of Regents will not assert an ownership interest in the copyright of scholarly or educational materials, artworks, musical compositions and literary works related to the author's academic or professional field, regardless of the medium of expression. Such creators are encouraged to manage their copyrights

per the guidelines concerning the management and marketing of copyrighted works consistent with applicable institutional policies.

As the Board of Regents has done historically, as reasonably required for the limited purpose of continuing an institution's scheduled course offerings, the Board of Regents retains for one year following the loss of a course instructor's services a fully paidup, royalty-free, nonexclusive worldwide license to use, copy, distribute, display, perform and create derivative works of materials prepared by the instructor (including lectures, lecture notes, syllabi, study guides, bibliographies, visual aids, images, diagrams, multimedia presentations, examinations, web-ready content and educational software) for use in teaching a course.

