

SUNO

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY *at* NEW ORLEANS

Online Policies and Procedures Manual

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General Information

eLearning Mission

The mission of the Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) Department of eLearning is to support academic excellence for faculty and students, providing flexibility and autonomy in relation to course scheduling for a diverse population of traditional and nontraditional learners as they engage in multi-media internet connected courses and electronically delivered activities. Online education allows students to engage with their peers and professors and benefit from various instructional methods and educational perspectives. The staff of the Department of eLearning provides support services to consistently enhance the overall teaching and learning experience for faculty and students.

The mission of the Director of eLearning is consistent with the mission of Academic Affairs and the University, which is to provide academic support services to SUNO's students, faculty, and staff via synchronous and asynchronous delivery of course content and to provide a strong, reliable online presence for the university.

What is eLearning?

eLearning includes the use of technology within a learning management system (LMS) to allow instruction of coursework fully online. This can also include training and other technology support within the learning environment such as email, compressed or streamed video and other instructional technologies. SUNO provides instruction for working adults who desire to continue their education in the evening or on weekends, allowing greater flexibility to its diverse student population. Online courses are rigorous and cover the same material as campus-based classes. Credits earned through eLearning course work are transferable and appear on student academic transcripts.

eLearning Goals:

- to provide high-quality academic support services for faculty who teach web-based and web enhanced courses
- to increase student access to learning resources by providing faculty with the necessary tools and resources to create pedagogically sound web-based and web-enhanced courses and to provide support for use of software applications and multimedia classroom equipment available at SUNO
- to provide quality multimedia assistance for faculty and staff through workshops, individual assistance via phone and email support while determining new and creative uses for technology in the academic environment
- to support the integration of technology into education by providing a reliable, strong web presence for SUNO

Organizational Information

The eLearning Director oversees the department and reports directly to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to resolve issues, receive feedback, and offer guidance in relation to maintaining a quality online program.

Quality of Courses

The course name and numbering of eLearning courses are synonymous with traditional, campus-based courses. The courses' goals and objectives, learning outcomes, textbooks, syllabi, methods of evaluation and any other instructional activities will be equivalent to campus-based courses.

Curriculum

The Office of Academic Affairs safeguards the integrity of all course outlines offered by SUNO. Using course outlines, faculty create individual course syllabi. Course outlines are constantly updated through curriculum development and SUNO's course numbering system. All eLearning and traditional campus courses are outlined using the same process.

eLearning Course Delivery System

The difference between campus-based courses and E-Learning courses is the mode of delivery. All eLearning courses are funneled through the same curriculum process as campus-based courses. Online students can access course content 24/7 from anywhere at any time using varied devices through Wi-Fi or devices' data packages. Every course indicates deadlines for completion of all course work. SUNO Online courses are delivered using the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS).

E-learning courses are offered as follows:

- **Web-enhanced** – the instructor develops a companion website for campus-based class for students to collaborate. The instructor can provide syllabi, handouts, and presentations to the students. Students can access the course using their own internet connection or use any one of SUNO's computer labs located on campus.
- **Hybrid** – this type of course requires that 75% of the content be taught in a campus-based environment. The remaining instruction is taught using Canvas to deliver the content in an online environment. This type of course is indicated in the course schedule with an **(HYB)** following the course ID number to alert students that part of content is facilitated in a non-traditional environment (via the LMS)
- **Online** – all course instruction is delivered via the web through SUNO's Canvas LMS. Students must have a reliable Internet connection, along with an up-to-date system and software to complete course work in an online environment. Students will be required to take examinations in a secure testing environment.

eLearning Course Development, Design, and Delivery

As stated in Section 496 of August 14, 2008, Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA):

“Accrediting agencies must require institutions that offer online education or correspondence education to have processes to establish that the student who registers is the same student who participates in and completes the work and gets the academic credit.”

The following guidelines and services are offered to address the needs of SUNO’s students, to better serve instructors in the development of their online courses, and to enhance the quality of the university’s online courses/programs. All instructors are required to develop their eLearning courses; however, support is provided, and the courses must be developed in alignment with a pre-set format determined and included in the course shells. The course guidelines address opportunities to enhance SUNO’s online programs by adhering to the following:

- Standardizing the “look” of the course to create a branding for the university
- Standardizing and thus simplifying the navigation of the courses to improve student engagement and retention
- Growing class offerings to meet student needs
- Assisting instructors, as requested, with the development of course material to meet standards for online courses
- Providing quality control and continuous enhancement of our online programs

eLearning Services Provided

- Design and maintenance of a course template to provide a standard look for the online course.
- Workshops and online tutorials on course development standards, policies and best pedagogical practices
- Assistance with the development of course material, including general advice on course organization of material, as well as assistance with file formatting
- Course reviews to ensure quality and compliance with course requirement
- Course navigation support for eLearning students
- Canvas username and password

Canvas Username and Password

All students who are enrolled in eLearning courses at SUNO are issued a secure username and password for access to the Canvas LMS. The username and password are generated from the student information system registration rosters and are unique to each student.

Faculty involved in online course development collaborate with the Office/Department of eLearning personnel on his or her designated campus prior to the procurement and deployment of any electronic delivery.

Academic Integrity and Student Verification

Faculty teaching online courses and eLearning administrative staff will ensure that the following occur:

- Distance education policy statements about academic integrity are clearly stated and easily found in course syllabi.
- Student assignments are checked for plagiarism via Turnitin
- Written work from the student (e.g. papers, online discussions, essay exam questions) is graded according to university and classroom policies.
- Web monitoring and web-proctored exams are effectively utilized
- Synchronous and asynchronous eLearning is monitored

Student interaction with faculty and other students (e.g. group projects and group discussion) occurs through email, group discussions via Canvas or other communication medium to promote student/faculty engagement.

Faculty Issues

The academic qualifications for distance education faculty should be the same requirements for faculty teaching the same courses in the in-person format. Individual campuses will provide orientation, training and support services for faculty teaching eLearning courses. Instructional materials must be reviewed and revised periodically. Procedures are in place for appropriate evaluation of faculty teaching online courses. The respective department chairs and/or deans for each campus evaluate all full-time and adjunct faculty annually.

Online Education Academic Issues

Academic Integrity of Online Education Courses

Online education courses are subject to the same regulations as stated in the individual university catalog. Requirements such as the grading system, examinations, research projects, course evaluation, faculty evaluation, and the attendance policy are considered part of academic integrity.

Enrollment

The enrollment process for students in online courses is equivalent to the procedures used for traditional classroom courses. All established policies and procedures pertaining to registration, drop/add, withdrawal, etc. are applicable to eLearning courses.

Enrollment Caps

The deans, department chairs, program leaders, and the director of eLearning for each campus determine online course enrollment decisions. Please refer to the specific guidelines for your individual campus regarding enrollment caps.

Copyright

Faculty members must ensure compliance with all copyright laws concerning the use and reproduction of printed materials and transmission of films, recording, videotapes or other protected works.

Student Support Services

Southern University provides online education students access to appropriate student support services. Online students have access to online admissions information and application support, online financial aid assistance, testing and assessment. Other services including registration, payment of tuition, academic advising, placement services and computer help desk support are all available via websites, emails, virtual platforms, fax or phone. Student support services for enrollment, campus contacts, course schedules, bookstores, online learning assistance are available through campus websites and eLearning department.

Canvas Training Course Development and Design Resources

Canvas training workshops were conducted via an Instructure facilitator. Recordings of the trainings are available upon request. Additionally, a Canvas toolbox course, which encompasses links to videos and step-by-step tutorials, is available to each faculty member upon request.

Content & Delivery – Online and Hybrid Course

Online and hybrid course content is organized and begins with the general header and course modules/topics. The general header is the starting point for all online/hybrid courses.

Module/Topic must contain at minimum:

- Introduction - this is a general statement about the module and how it relates to the objectives of the course
- Student Learning Outcomes - there should be 1-3 specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and timed outcomes per module
- Learning Activities – Examples include lecture notes, PowerPoints, videos, audio recordings, web quest, readings, etc.
- Discussion Board - used as a component to help increase student engagement and

decrease student withdrawal rates. Students who participate regularly in class are more likely to complete tasks and the course.

- Assessment(s) - student presentations, tests, quizzes, assignments

Each module/topic engages students in the appropriate student contact time equivalent to classroom contact time.

Content – Web Component Course

In addition to the standard course dashboard, content/design, and web component course sites should include and utilize at minimum of three instructional components such as the following:

- Forums
- Self-Test
- Multimedia Assignments
- Instructional Support (i.e., presentations, lesson reviews, handouts, links to online resources, etc.)

Assessments can be applied in a variety of formats. It is recommended to provide this assessment/feedback in every module/topic (chapter, lesson, unit, etc.), but not required. However, in an online environment, the need to provide periodic assessments is much greater than in the traditional classroom. The ‘midterm and final’ is not an effective assessment procedure. Since faculty are not meeting the class on a face-to-face basis, more attention is required for students attending and participating in online courses.

Online Compliance Policy

Online Education Student Access

Support services will be provided for students who are taking online education courses with the similitude that support services are offered to students who attend on ground campus courses.

Faculty Certification

Faculty assigned to teach online courses are required to complete Quality Matters (QM)-related and Canvas training and adhere to additional requests, as determined by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs to maintain compliance and certification.

Course Design

Online courses will be designed by the instructor assigned to the course. Online education courses must be designed in accordance with the QM Specific Review Standards and any additional requirements set forth. SUNO’s online instructional designer will review eLearning courses to ensure compliance, provide resources for course development, and make recommendations regarding course delivery.

Proctoring

To ensure the authenticity, integrity and security of the exam process, Respondus Lockdown Browser is utilized system-wide for academic programs that require proctoring. Guidelines for Respondus will be provided by each eLearning course's instructor.

Library Services

SUNO provides online access to and resources for the campus library for online students. Access to the library and its online resources are readily accessible and available on SUNO's website.

Virtual Office Hours

Faculty assigned to teach online courses are required to hold virtual office hours weekly. After-hours availability is encouraged. Faculty may host synchronous office hours in which online education students will be able to drop-in at a specific time each week. Students may request to schedule an appointment for virtual office hours, or an asynchronous option for office hours may be included via the discussion board in the Canvas course's shell. Here, students can post questions for the instructor and receive a reply; this option may be beneficial for all students enrolled in the course.

Faculty Response Time

Faculty are required to respond to student inquiries within 24-48 hours. Grades and feedback for submitted assignments should be provided within 7-10 days. If the faculty is unable to meet the requested response time, online students should be notified via the "Announcement" section in Canvas and/or via email.

Student Attendance/Absence

At the beginning of the course, the instructor must communicate with the students by making documented class policies and his/her expectations regarding the format and frequency of class participation available to him/her.

Absence policy for online courses provided by SUNO adheres to the same policy as traditional courses outlined in the Southern University at New Orleans catalog.

Online instruction differs fundamentally from traditional classroom instruction in that the student may access the online resources at times that are convenient to the student's personal schedule within a range of times defined by the instructor. However, consistent attendance is required to successfully complete an online course.

Attendance will be monitored by timely submission of assignments, including tests, homework, projects, etc. A student is expected to complete all assignments by the appropriate due date. It is understandable that extenuating circumstances occur, such as an extreme illness, death in the family, legal matters, or military duty.

It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to substantiate such circumstances, at which time the instructor will determine if an extension is warranted. Students and instructors of online courses will adhere to the academic calendar and the process of appeal.

Circumstances that are NOT considered extenuating:

- Registering late for the class
- Failure to read the syllabus
- Failure to plan appropriately
- Not having the appropriate textbook or software
- Technical problems

Before the Course Begins

- Update current course content in Canvas before the first week
- Review course content and repair any broken hyperlinks, images, etc.
- Update syllabus and any other instructional-specific course materials
- Update course calendar and/or syllabus
- Publish the course (each module and the course)

Many instructors use the Canvas “calendar” tool to help students see and remember important due dates. Others prefer to include the aforementioned information in their syllabi or in a stand-alone document. Regardless of location, students appreciate having this information prior to the beginning of the class.

Update All Course Content

- Ensure that the open and close dates are current for all assignments, exams, etc.
- Create Canvas attendance (i.e., ensure that assignments are required within the first two weeks to adhere to the Southern University System (SUS) Distance Education Attendance Policy).
- Create Canvas Gradebook
- Before creating the gradebook, decide if points or percentages will be used to calculate grades.

Set up “Start Here” in Canvas

This section will provide students with the following information:

- Name of textbook
- Materials that need to be purchased and where to purchase them
- Name of individual to contact for technical assistance
- Professor's name and contact information

Grade All Assignments

- Assignments should be graded within the stated time frame in the “Start Here” section
- Return calls as stated in the “Start Here” section
- Use official Southern University email (SUNO or campus extension)
- Upload all assignments in Canvas
- Each instructor is encouraged to set up a virtual office with an overview of the class and contact students weekly to introduce them to the weekly lessons.

Throughout the Class

- Monitor the class discussion forums
- Monitor Canvas for new messages and respond within 24 to 48 hours

Research shows that online courses with high levels of instructor-to-student interaction have a positive impact on student satisfaction and learning and supports the following:

- Students who perceived that they had high levels of interaction with the instructor also had high levels of satisfaction with the course and reported higher levels of learning, compared to students who thought they had less interaction.
- An active presence on the part of the instructor—one in which s/he actively guides and coordinates the discourse—relates positively to both a student's sense of connectedness and learning.
- The role of the instructor in course interactions is among the most critical for student success in online courses.

Grade All Assignments

Students appreciate timely feedback on their assignments. The length of time required to grade assignments and send meaningful feedback to students depends on the nature of the assignment. However, students may not be able to proceed in the course until they get feedback on previous assignments. As a rule of thumb, it seems reasonable to expect students to receive their grades, including feedback, within 48-72 hours of submitting an assignment. If the

instructor anticipates that it will take longer to return students' work, it is best to inform them in advance of the dates that their grades and feedback will be available. Doing so will eliminate excessive questions from students and calls to the academic departments. Please consider grading assignments in sequence (i.e., assignment 1, then assignment 2, and so on) to permit students to apply feedback from one assignment to subsequent assignments.

Note: Do not wait until the end of the semester to grade the students' assignments. Be professional and courteous when addressing student needs.

First Week of Class

The first requirement for most online courses is for students to post a self-introduction to a class discussion forum in Canvas so that students can become familiar with each other and begin to build a sense of community. This is also a great way for the instructor to become familiar with his or her students and the unique perspectives and experiences they bring to the class. Post a "personal introduction" to start the conversation. In the post, tell students what information they should include in their introductions. Post a professional biography and allow students to get to know the professor and learn from and appreciate their unique perspectives and experiences.

Encourage your students to begin the class by reviewing the syllabus and working through orientation material. Be sure to include directions for accessing those materials. Contact students who have not logged into Canvas to determine how you can assist them.

Weekly

Once a week (preferably on the same day each week):

- Conduct virtual office hours utilizing WebEx or Zoom, preferably at the same time. Adjust the time as needed for students, giving students a chance to communicate with the professor in real-time can help build strong relationships and motivate students to fully engage in the class. Record and include a brief introduction video.
- Record a brief introduction video for each new lesson in the class.
- Recordings should be uploaded in Canvas for the students whose schedules do not permit them to attend the synchronous sessions.
- Remind students of course expectations and due dates.
- Update your course content with any new or revised due dates.
- Summarize discussion forum conversations and add a conclusion to each discussion.

At Mid-term

Gather mid-term feedback from students. Administering a mid-class evaluation is a great way to gauge how well the class is going from a student's perspective. A survey can be administered through Canvas. Use the data to improve the online course. Submit midterm grades on time or before time each semester.

Before the Class Ends

- Be sure all assignments are graded and responses have been given to emails and inquiries.
- Encourage students to complete an online survey in Canvas as required.
- Submit your final grades before or on time each semester.
- Constantly review and revise your course materials

After the Class

- Adhere to your academic department for the policies and procedures implemented for retaining and submitting student grades and documents (tests, assignments, etc.). Most of these items should already have been retained in the LMS shell for the course.
- A student may request that a final grade be reviewed. The student should address the concern directly to the faculty member. A grade change form can be completed if a grading error is determined. If the student disagrees with the faculty member's decision, she or he may also seek assistance or intervention from the department chair or other appropriate academic administrators.

Final Exams

Faculty members administer final examinations in accordance with the campus calendar. The schedule and regulations for the administration of final examinations are published with the semester class schedule. Faculty members may not alter the examination schedule without the consent of administration, except in the case of graduating seniors.

Due Dates/Major Holiday Observance

Online/Hybrid courses are conducted in an asynchronous environment; therefore, students are provided with a certain time/day to complete assigned activities, and observance of major holidays, as indicated by the semester's Academic Calendar, should be observed. Hence, due dates should not be set for any major holiday and official SUNO breaks.

Additional eLearning Information, Policies and Guidelines, and Student Support Services

Southern University at New Orleans Internet Use Policy

SUNO provides access to the Internet conducive for the educational environment. All users equally share resources afforded by the university. All Internet/Wi-Fi use is free of illegal or malicious acts and requires proper Internet etiquette application.

Assessment of Student Capabilities

SUNO assesses students' capability to succeed in eLearning/online programs through web-based, self-assessment software called SmarterMeasure, an online learning readiness indicator. All freshmen students at SUNO requesting online courses are required to complete the entire assessment and must pass the Technical Knowledge section with a score of at least 75 %, and Technical Competency section with a score of at least 90% in order to be enrolled in any online course. The readiness assessment can be found on the following web page: <https://www.sun0.edu/page/smartermeasure>.

Services for Disability Students – Updated ADA Statement

SUNO is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities in compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Students may request accommodation by registering with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) by emailing ods@sun0.edu or calling 504-284-5472. It is important to request services as early in the semester as possible. Also, it is important to note that ADA ACCOMMODATIONS ARE NOT RETROACTIVE. All discussions with the faculty/student/ODS will remain confidential. Course syllabi are available in alternate formats upon request.

The Services for Students with Disabilities program addresses the needs of our diverse population of students with disabilities and provides special assistance, accommodations, and appropriate services/programs to ensure accessibility and to meet the needs of individuals with documented disabilities. The program's main purpose is to instill self-advocacy in students with disabilities and to provide auxiliary aids to ensure full participation in all university activities and programs.

The program offers academic support services which cannot be developed or adequately provided by other campus departments. Such academic support services include tutorial services, enlarged printed materials, test proctoring and specialized computerized equipment.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (504) 286-5335 upon admission to the university and to provide official documentation about their disability. All information received is confidential and released with the written consent of the student, except in emergency cases. Please visit the Services for Students with Disabilities website.

Learning Resources/Library

The university ensures that students participating in eLearning programs have access to adequate and appropriate learning resources. Faculty, staff and students have access to the catalog databases, library services, and other resources. Students participating in online/hybrid also have access to library resources from the SUNO eLearning web page at: <https://www.sun0.edu/page/onlinelibraryresources>.

Student Assessment of Online/Hybrid Faculty and Courses

Student evaluations are administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness creates an online survey link for each fall and spring semester specific for each online course. This link is then embedded within the Canvas LMS at the end of the semester. Students are asked to take a few moments to complete the survey which is completely anonymously. The results provide feedback for the continuous improvement of instructional delivery. Also, in some situations, the provision of information is used as one factor in making personnel decisions. The following guidelines are to be observed regarding student evaluations of instruction:

- The evaluation will be administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
- Confidentiality of student responses is secured.
- The instructor will be provided with a composite of the results after the end of the grading period.

In addition to this survey, individual instructors are asked to create a short survey for each online/hybrid course taught in order to get specific course feedback for improvement on items such as but not limited to announcement posting, course content, course delivery, turn around on contact time, textbook, etc.

Textbook

All eLearning students are required to purchase required textbooks for successful completion of the course. The specific ISBN for the course textbook is required for each online/hybrid course. The student can then purchase the textbook at the university book store or from another vendor of choice. eResources/eTextbooks are also available through the SUNO bookstore as indicated by the instructor of the course.

Hardware and Software Requirements

SUNO provide computer labs, facilities, and laptops necessary for students to meet program/course requirements and providing training and faculty support services for current and potential eLearning faculty members. However, all students wishing to enroll in an online/hybrid program/course must be aware that they are responsible for the resources necessary to successfully complete an online program/online course.

Student Complaint/Grievance Procedure

Southern University at New Orleans has an administrative procedure in place which is designed to receive, investigate, and resolve student complaints, whether academic or non-academic. Any student who wishes to make a formal complaint regarding a college program, a service of the college, an employee of the college, or any other individual or aspect of the college, must take the following steps:

- Before the Student Grievance board acts on any grievance brought by a student, the

grievance must have been presented in writing via a grievance form located in the Office of Academic Affairs (academic grievance) or in the Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (non-academic). The grievance must also have been fully discussed with the head of the department or unit involved without receiving satisfaction within a reasonable period.

- All meetings of the board will be held in closed sessions with only members and parties involved in the grievance present.
- All parties involved in the grievance shall be present when evidence is introduced and either party will be permitted to have an academic advisor or legal counsel of his or her choice.
- All parties in the grievance will be given not less than one week to prepare for the hearing and will be notified in writing as to the time and place of the hearing.
- A recording and written summary will be made of all proceedings of the Board and will be submitted to the Chancellor for final disposition.
- All persons involved will receive copies of the hearing summary.

Withdrawal /Resignation from University

A student who finds it necessary to withdraw (drop) from a course will be allowed to withdraw with a “W” through 75% of the semester. After the 75% mark, students will NOT be allowed to initiate a withdrawal. Students who stop attending after the 75% mark will receive a grade of “F”. Students who are administratively withdrawn due to extreme hardship after the 75% mark must be passing the course to receive a “W”; otherwise, students will receive an “F” for the course. In order to withdraw from an online course, a student must submit a written request via email to the Registrar’s Office (Registrar@suno.edu).

A student who desires to resign from the university should contact his or her academic advisor. The advisor will provide the necessary counseling regarding the withdrawal process.

Online Education Program Policies and Procedures for Faculty: Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the right of members of the academic community to study, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research, and publish freely as appropriate to their respective roles and responsibilities. Because the common good depends upon the free search for, and exposition of truth and understanding, full freedom in research and publication is essential, as is the freedom to discuss scholarly subjects in the classroom. In all personnel actions related to academic staff, the principle of academic freedom shall be recognized. Academic freedom is not to be confused with organization, layout, or design in online classes. Faculty are expected to implement best practices in online course design as laid out in the Quality Matters rubric. Applying institutional templates and incorporating links and other information deemed important or essential by QM is not an infringement of a faculty member’s academic freedom.

Appointment & Workload

Online faculty are appointed and vetted through their designated departments; faculty will follow the Human Resources (HR) process for hiring, meeting all campus criteria. For accreditation purposes, faculty must be credentialed to teach a course. Upon completing the application process, the instructor is required to submit a CV, all post-secondary transcripts, and Quality Matters certifications to department chairs before being permitted to teach.

Overload

Please refer to SUNO's Faculty Handbook for information regarding the overload policy.

Facilitating Online Courses

All faculty members are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Meet classes regularly and promptly as scheduled.
- Provide department chairpersons and students in each class with syllabi at the beginning of each term. Syllabi should include instructional methods, objectives, grading criteria, and attendance policy.
- Ensure that course instruction conforms to stated objectives and correlates with course descriptions found in the campus catalog.
- Submit all mid-semester and final grades on time.
- Evaluate all student work promptly and provide students an opportunity for review of submitted work.
- Retain final papers and other work supporting a grade issued to a student for at least six weeks after the beginning of the next term, or longer when an appeal has been filed.
- Announce, post, and maintain a suitable number of office hours which are convenient to students and the teacher.
- Maintain accurate records of class attendance by all students.
- Advise assigned students in accordance with campus policy.

Prepare to Teach

- Faculty assigned to teach a course that has already been developed for online delivery can request to have the course "rolled over" from a previous semester. An instructional designer or the eLearning director will contact the faculty to determine if any revisions are required or if assistance is desired.
- Faculty assigned to a course should identify and select any required textbooks and/ or course materials several months in advance of the course start date, when possible. Faculty should contact their department's administrative assistant for more information about ordering textbooks.

- If a course requires a faculty-authored textbook, the faculty member should obtain approval from the designated academic department leader.
- A course syllabus and course content should be posted in the LMS no later than seven (7) days before the first day of class.

Teaching an Online Class

- When possible, faculty should post the syllabus and course calendar one week prior to the course start date.
- Once the course has started, to avoid confusion for students, faculty should conduct all course-related communication within the LMS.

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 with advance notice with instructions on how to contact the faculty member if needed.

- Faculty should respond to student communication as quickly as possible—ideally in no more than two working days. A statement of expectation for response time should be provided in the syllabus so that students are aware of the parameters. If a student concern requires more than two days to resolve, faculty should send an acknowledgment email.
- Faculty should log into the course no fewer than three different days a week.
- Faculty should provide regular feedback to students in response to discussion boards, assignments, tests, and so on. Particularly in 8-week courses, students should receive feedback on their work within one week of submission.
- Faculty should regularly submit grades in the LMS' online grade book.
- Faculty who suspects a student of plagiarism or some form of academic dishonesty should address the matter promptly and appropriately.

Concluding the Class

- Students will be required to complete their course evaluations before the course ends. Faculty should encourage students to complete the questions by the determined deadline.

- Faculty should prepare grades for submission by the deadline designated by the Registrar's Office. If there is a concern about posting grades by the deadline, please contact the Registrar as soon as possible.
- If a student is unable to complete the coursework due to extenuating circumstances, when appropriate, faculty should follow the process of assigning a grade of "Incomplete" and later changing that grade when the work is completed. Faculty are encouraged to establish a reasonable deadline for the work to be completed so as not to impede student progress toward graduation.

Grading System

The SUS uses the following system of grading: "A"-exceptional; "B"-above average; "C"-average; "D"-below average; "F"-failure; "I"-incomplete; "W"-withdrawal. The grade of "P" is used on the permanent records of undergraduate students to indicate satisfactory completion of non-traditional courses, undergraduate departmental comprehensive examinations, writing proficiency tests, and computer literacy examinations, or to indicate that students have successfully earned credit. "AU" will be given for auditing a course; however, no credit will be given. Credit for any course in which a student has received a grade of "F" can be obtained only by repeating the course and earning a passing grade.

Incomplete Grades

Academic work which is of passing quality but because of extenuating circumstances is not complete, may be graded "I"-Incomplete. Students must initiate an incomplete grade request and must secure appropriate approval of the excuse from the instructor, department head and Dean of the college in which the course is taken. If an excuse is not received prior to issuing a final grade, the instructor is to consider the delinquent work to be of failing quality and an "I" grade should not be given. A grade of "I" becomes a grade of "F" if not removed by the end of the first half of the following session, if the student is in residence; or within one year, if the student is not in residence. The grade of "I" shall not be calculated in the cumulative grade-point average for retention purposes. Graduating seniors are not permitted to receive "I" grades. The instructor must submit the proper "Incomplete Grade Report" form and file the form with the Office of the Registrar when the "I" grade is submitted for recording. Copies of the grade shall also be filed in the office of the faculty member's department.

Change of Grades

Any change of grade must be initiated by the instructor on the required form available in the Office of the Registrar. Such changes require the approval of the department head and the dean of the instructor's college before the registrar will accept and make the change to the student's record. Any grade change must be received in the office of the registrar within sixty days from

the start of classes in the semester immediately following the grade period (semester or summer session) in which the grade was given.

Note: Please confer with your SUNO's grading system as variations may apply.

Submitting Grades

Grades are submitted in Banner by the date indicated on the session calendar. To submit grades, faculty should follow this procedure:

1. Login to Self-Service Banner/Banner 9.
2. Select "Faculty and Advisors" option on the Main Menu.
3. Select "Midterm Grades" or "Final Grades" as appropriate.
4. Select the appropriate campus and term from the dropdown menu and select "Submit".
5. Select the appropriate class from the dropdown menu and select "Submit".
6. Enter grades, and when appropriate, last date of attendance, and select "Submit".

Faculty Evaluation by Students

The primary purpose of this evaluation by students is to improve instruction. The results of these evaluations may be used, along with other information, in decisions regarding retention, tenure, promotion, and discretionary salary increases. Faculty are alerted when their classes should be evaluated through a tool available in the LMS or by instruments used by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Academic Policies and Procedures

For further information, see the campus Policies and Procedures and the Faculty Handbook.

Statement on Non-Discrimination

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other federal, state, and local laws, the SUS forbids discrimination or harassing conduct that is based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, ethnicity, national origin or ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, veteran or military status, membership in Uniformed Services, and all other categories protected by applicable state and federal laws. This commitment applies but is not limited to decisions made with respect to hiring and promotion, the administration educational programs and policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other college-administered programs. Discriminatory acts of any kind are strictly forbidden.

Accreditation and State Authorization

Accreditation certifies acceptable institutional and program quality. The accreditation process promotes an institution's continuous improvement. Maintaining accreditation enables SUNO to receive and distribute federal financial aid funds. Also, accreditation is important for the acceptance and transfer of college credits. Campuses of the SUS are accredited by the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#) to award certificates, baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. If a complaint is not resolved by the campus, students may file a complaint with its accrediting agency. Students may contact:

SACSCOC

1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097
Phone: 404-679-4500

SUBR, SUNO, and SUSLA are approved by the State of Louisiana, under the Southern Regional Board compact, to participate in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements ([NC-SARA](#), [SARA-Louisiana](#)). “State Authorization” refers to a state's requirement that universities secure authorization to offer instruction in that state. NC-SARA is a voluntary agreement that establishes comparable national standards for offering postsecondary distance education courses and programs. It is intended to give students confidence that online degrees offered by out-of-state schools are properly authorized, thus improving the quality of online education. Campuses of the SUS operate in Louisiana as a public, not for profit universities with full institutional accreditation.

The Louisiana Board of Regents responds to online education students’ complaints against Louisiana-approved SARA institutions. Staff will review complaints and work with students and institutions to ensure compliance and arbitrate disputes between institutions and students. Use this link to review the full [Complaint Procedure](#) and the [Complaint Form](#).

Note: Additional information about faculty policies and procedures are expounded upon in SUNO’s Policies and Procedures and the Faculty Handbook

Learning Management System (LMS) Use Policy Statement

The purpose of our LMS Use Policy is to assist the campuses of the SUS with maintaining compliance with applicable policy, procedures, and the law. It is also to clarify expectations, consistency, and create a structure for Best Practices when using Canvas.

This policy addresses important considerations in the use of the LMS, Canvas at SUS campuses. Each campus Office/Department of eLearning will administer the LMS to ensure optimal performance, manage user accounts, safeguard user privacy and data, and provide technical support for faculty and students.

The Use Policy incorporates Instructure’s assurances and protections for course and student data related to courses as well as SUS’ eLearning Department’s/Office’s commitment to safeguard confidential student data and other academic content as follows:

- Provide security for confidential student data per FERPA obligations
- Enable access and security protocols that protect confidential student data
- Enable data retention policies and user account lifecycles specific to academic course content and student work per data governance decisions
- Comply with the terms of the vendor contract to alleviate potential financial risk

Instructure Canvas is the official LMS platform supported by the SUS. This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, and others who use Instructure LMS instances, herein collectively referred to as “Canvas”.

This policy does not cover independent use of any LMS, which is not supported as the official LMS nor external tools not managed by the SUS that instructors might deploy to supplement their courses (e.g. external blogs, wikis, e-packs, etc.).

Procedures and Responsibilities

The SUNO Department of eLearning staff supports faculty instructional efforts to utilize Canvas for traditional and non-traditional classes. The Information Technology Center (the ITC) and eLearning staff provides technical support, offers instructional design services, and delivers training resources to faculty in best practices of online course development and instructional technology implementation. The eLearning staff/LMS support services team and ITC team also intend to improve student success by ensuring optimal performance of the LMS by overseeing system access authorizations, managing account creations, maintaining system operations, training users, and providing technical support.

Applicability - This policy shall apply to faculty, staff, and students utilizing the SUS LMS for instructional and/or learning purposes.

Detailed LMS Use Policy

1. All users of the Canvas LMS must adhere to the University’s Information Technology policies below: <https://www.subr.edu/assets/subr/DoIT/Network-Device-Policy-April-2019.pdf>
<https://www.subr.edu/assets/subr/DoIT/IT-DataClassification-Approved.pdf>
2. Delivery and access to copyright materials in LMS must comply with Copyright Law (Title 17 of the United States Code <http://www.copyright.gov/title17/>). In addition, copyright use must comply with University Policy. Please note that Canvas may restrict access to course materials for which authenticated users do not have the authorized use of

copyright text, images, etc.

3. SUS is not responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and/or legality of the content uploaded to the LMS by its students, staff, or faculty. The University is not responsible for content linked from LMS to external web sites.
4. All users of the Canvas LMS are prohibited from using the platform for purposes other than University-affiliated activities. Only sponsored agencies connected to the University including accrediting agency representatives, presenters, and course observers may be granted access to Canvas with approval from the appropriate channels including academic Chairs and Deans or other University Executive including the Provost or the President's office. Office of Distance Learning staff should be notified when course owners add any external agents to the system.
5. All employees who have access to student information in the LMS are required to adhere to the safeguards included in the University's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") Policy to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of protected student information.
6. All users of the LMS are responsible for maintaining the security of usernames, passwords and any other access credentials assigned. Access credentials may not be shared, written down, or given to anyone other than the user to whom they were assigned.
7. Access to the Canvas is granted to currently enrolled students and instructors of record for published term courses. Course rosters are generated via official enrollments in Banner. Course owners and administrators should not grant course access to students not listed in the official roster using student email addresses.

Note: SUS applicants do not have access to Canvas. Once they have been admitted and enrollment confirmed, access will be granted to sign in to Canvas.

8. Faculty and staff hosting a course in Canvas shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and all institutional rules, policies, and procedures.
9. Illegal content or content that is in violation of the University's policies or contractual agreements shall be removed from a course account if requested by the instructor of record or another appropriate academic administrator.

User Management and Access

To appropriately secure course content and student data, the ability to sign in to Canvas is restricted generally to current employees, students, and staff. Employees may lose the ability to sign in to the SUS Canvas LMS after they separate from Southern University System, in parallel with IT Services.

1. All users of Canvas LMS must access the system through a designated account generated from Banner.
2. The instructor(s) of record (IOR) and students enrolled in a course as listed in Banner will have access to the course site in the Canvas LMS. Official student enrollments will be managed from Banner including adding new students, student withdrawals, and drops.
3. For purposes of managing program curriculum and continuous quality control, departmental chairs and designated college leaders can request course access from ODL staff and will be granted access to term courses to review and perform assessment activity including, viewing learning outcomes, course analytics, and usage.
4. Faculty may not use Departmental Class Shells or Term Course Shells on behalf of external users and former students and extend system access to said users for the purposes of pursuing activity unrelated to official University business. Any such accounts discovered will be removed by the LMS Technology Management staff.
5. Access to the Canvas may be disabled or suspended for users who display inappropriate behavior per the [University's Acceptable Use Policy](#) and other guiding policies that define appropriate conduct for University employees and students. Students who misuse the Canvas platform will be referred to the appropriate University governing body.

User Responsibilities

1. All users are responsible for conformance to university policies and procedures, as well as meeting technical requirements to access course content. Users must have reliable access to the internet and must regularly upgrade their personal browsers to meet minimum requirements for accessing Canvas LMS content. Canvas is designed to operate
2. efficiently in the latest two versions of the chosen browser. Users are recommended to use the latest version of Mozilla Firefox for the best results. However, other acceptable browsers include Safari and Internet Explorer.

3. Faculty should notify the Office of Southern University eLearning (SU Online) of their intent to integrate third-party software, external applications, and e-packs which may require additional support and/or result in additional integration costs for the University and or student.
4. Faculty should ensure that all content meets [ADA requirements](#) for accessibility. Faculty who needs assistance with meeting ADA requirements should contact Office of Distance Learning staff for assistance with tools and support to develop compliant content.

All users must maintain an air of decorum when creating personal profiles. This includes profile pictures and display names. Users may not create profiles containing demeaning or derogatory language nor images deemed as vulgar or otherwise offensive.

Support

In addition to support from the eLearning team, SUNO provides 24/7 support services from Canvas for all users. To report a problem in Canvas, click on the Canvas Support icon within Canvas (Left bottom Navigation pane). Then, choose “Report a Problem” from the list. Users can connect via live chat, phone or email at any time.

Students:

[Chat with Canvas Support \(Student\)](#)

Teachers:

[Chat with Canvas Support \(Teachers\)](#)

The Department of eLearning is also responsible for technical support for the LMS (Canvas); assistance can be obtained via email or phone.

SUNO Department of eLearning Team Contact Information

SUNO Department of eLearning Team

Melinda Roberts Perry, *Executive Online Director*

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