# Distance Education Faculty Handbook

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## I: Distance Education Mission

To provide educational opportunities to students through an alternative delivery method, Lee College faculty will provide and promote superior distance education in keeping with expectations of local industry and 4 year institutions.

## II: General Information

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[Lee College Blackboard Learn](#)
[Lee College Website](#)
[Lee College Library](#)
[Lee College Counseling](#)
[Lee College Distance Education](#)
[Lee College Title IX Information](#)

From the Lee College website, you can access the Blackboard Learn site by clicking on either the Student Logins link or the Logins link. From there, you can click on the Blackboard Learn link.

Additionally, you can directly access the Lee College Blackboard Learn site at this URL: https://elearn.lee.edu

Contact Information:

Lee College Helpdesk…………………………………………..          281-425-6952
Lee College Testing Center………………………………….          281-425-6430
Lee College Counseling and Advising Center…………………..          281-425-6384

Dr. Laura Lane-Worley, Distance Education Coordinator….. 281-425-6265
Paula Lee, Blackboard Sys Admin……………………………          281-425-6285
Rashmi Chhetri, Instructional Designer……………………..          832-556-4042
Will Mayer, Online Education Librarian…………………………          832-556-4017

## III: Distance Education Committee

The Distance Education Committee provides for faculty input and oversight of online and hybrid instruction.  The committee is designed to be broadly representative of the entire campus.

 The membership includes the following:

1) Distance Education Coordinator (Chair)

2) One faculty representative from each academic division (7)

3) One faculty representative from each technical/vocational division (7)

4) Blackboard System Administrator

5) Instructional Designer

6) Representative of Student Services

7) Representative Disability Services

8) Representative of Continuing Education

9) Chief Technology Officer (ex officio)

10) Vice President of Instruction (ex officio)

11) Dean of Academic Studies (ex officio)

12) Dean of Applied Sciences (ex officio)

13) Student Representatives (ex officio)

Committee Duties and Responsibilities:

1) Review and recommend learning standards for online and hybrid courses

2) Review and evaluate technology needs of faculty and the IT Department

3) Review and recommend policies to improve student success

4) Provide pedagogical and technical training for faculty and staff

5) Provide tools for division chairs to evaluate OL faculty and OL courses

6) Assess and evaluate the quality of the distance learning program

The Distance Education Committee will meet 3 times in the fall semester, and 3 times in the spring semester. The Distance Education Coordinator will chair the committee. A majority of voting members will constitute a quorum. Meeting minutes and all other information will be posted on the employee portal.

Committee actions, such as policy recommendations and procedures, will go through the following process:

1) Distance Education Committee

2) Instructional Council, chaired by Vice President of Instruction

3) President's Cabinet

## IV: Course Approval Process

If a faculty member decides to develop a new online/hybrid course, he/she will follow the online/hybrid course approval process:

1.) Complete the Online-Hybrid Course Proposal Form
2.) Division Approval
3.) Submit the Online-Hybrid Course Proposal Form to the Distance Education Coordinator for submission to the Distance Education Committee
4.) Present the proposal to the Distance Education Committee
5.) The Distance Education Coordinator will notify the faculty member, division chair, and appropriate Dean of the outcome of the proposal.
6.) Request for generation (if the course is new) or reset (if the course was taught as face-to-face) of the type of course symbol for the course (e.g., H001 or OL01)

## V. Distance Education Goals:

The goal of Distance Education is to provide Lee College students the opportunity to earn college credit through alternative, technology-based methods of instruction and learning. As an instructor in online courses, your role is to provide these students with the same high-quality instruction they would receive in the physical classroom.

Although the role of distance education faculty is often perceived as passive because students do not directly interact with the instructor in a face-to-face environment, it is actually the proactive, energetic, engaging, and empathetic instructor who often makes or breaks the course for the student. The most important qualification an instructor brings to an online course is the knowledge of the course content and the ability to communicate this knowledge to the students in an interactive and engaging manner. However, a distance education instructor should also have a number of the following personal characteristics to enhance the teaching role:

- A positive attitude towards online courses
- An understanding of the special needs of adult learners
- A good working knowledge of the learning management system
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent writing skills
- Good telephone communication
- A working knowledge of email
- Adaptability and versatility

- Excellent organizational skills
- An ability to use interactive technologies
- A commitment to timeliness in responding to students
- An interest in trying new forms of communication with students
- An understanding of accessibility requirements
- Organizational skills allowing for easy course navigation

Although the instructor's specific duties in teaching online and hybrid courses will be somewhat different from those in the classroom, the ultimate goal is to provide quality education to our students. Just as our students must have the self-discipline for home study, our instructors must have the flexibility in their teaching to serve these students well. This handbook is designed to help you with the goals and expectations of distance education at Lee College and to make your experience as a distance education instructor a positive one for both you and your students.

## VI. Distance Education Standards

### *Faculty Responsibilities*

1. Generate Blackboard Course Shell in PeopleSoft

2. The syllabus/outline and any first day handouts will be posted in the OL class prior to the first day of class. (Note: All courses in Blackboard open at midnight on the first day of class.)

3. Faculty must post a syllabus/outline specifically for their online course in which the faculty member addresses online assignments, quizzes, tests, discussion boards, journals, wikis, blogs and/or any other type of assessment requirements with due dates, information about adaptive release (if used), and any other pertinent information to help an online student navigate the course.

4. Faculty members and division chairs will ensure the curriculum offered in online courses is consistent and as rigorous as the curriculum offered in face-to-face courses.

5. Course materials posted should be common file types and meet accessibility standards.

6. Student academic support services (library, counseling, testing center, help desk, Lee College writing center, myLC Campus, and academic honesty policy) shall be clearly identified in the Online or Hybrid course.

7. Faculty should ensure their textbooks are listed in the Follett Discover Bookstore for ease of student access.

8. Course orientation is the responsibility of the faculty.  Faculty will require students to participate in an orientation.

9.  In order to clarify expectations to students, all faculty offering distance education courses must create succinct yet substantive summaries of meeting times or delivery methods for publication in the Lee College class schedules for each semester.  Further, if a faculty requires students to come to campus for testing or other activities, the faculty member must clearly indicate this information in the notes of the class published in the Lee College class schedules each semester.

10. Grading and necessary feedback will be completed within 2 weeks of the student's submission.

11. Faculty members will establish contact with students at the beginning of the semester and maintain regular communication throughout the term.  Communication will employ any suitable means including discussion boards, private e-mail, individualized chat sessions (including online "office hours"), telephone, face-to-face communication, math lab, writing lab, etc.

12. Faculty members will respond to student's voice mail or email within 2 working days.

13. Faculty members will promote instructor-student and student-student interaction.

14. Faculty members will be available to interact with students.

15. Faculty will maintain virtual office hours consistent with college policy.

16. Deadlines and expected activities will be clearly stated at the beginning of the term.

17. Faculty members will monitor student's participation and progress and follow the online attendance policy posted in the college catalog for withdrawal as used for on-campus classes.

18. All distance education faculty members will use the college's approved Learning Management System, Blackboard Learn. Supplemental learning management systems and outside learning resources will be linked inside the faculty member's course.

19. All electronic and information resources developed, procured or changed by an institution of higher education shall comply with the accessibility standards for institutions of higher education Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments in Sections 504 and 508.

20. It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure all copyright provisions are met and permissions have been obtained as appropriate.

21. Regardless of whether the course is online, hybrid, or face-to-face, all faculty must maintain an up-to-date gradebook for all courses.

22. Faculty will work to ensure online/hybrid courses meet the best practices as outlined in section **X. Best Practices** of this handbook.

_**Administrative Responsibilities**_

1. Instructors will meet with their division chairs and the distance education coordinator prior to the development of an online or hybrid course.

2. Instructors will complete the online/hybrid course approval process before the design of the course in Blackboard.

3. All online courses will undergo student evaluation consistent with the evaluation methods utilized in face-to-face courses.

4. Technical support for distance education courses and related support services will be provided through Lee College's structured services offered through the Office of Information Technology.

5. Support for Financial Aid, Library Resources, Counseling, Special Student Services, Career Services are offered through Lee College's website.

6. Distance education faculty will be assisted through training opportunities to develop online learning and assessment materials, and provided with ongoing professional development activities.

7. Adjunct faculty and full-time faculty will meet the same requirements to teach online courses as they do in face-to-face courses.
8. All distance education faculty must have documentation, on file in HR, of an online training certification for online instruction, or an equivalent accepted by the Distance Education Committee.

9. Students will retain the same rights to privacy in online classes as they would in a traditional classroom environment. Confidential information (including grades, private contact information, or personal information directly attributed to a student) should be transmitted only through secure interaction. Online discussion boards, open chat rooms, or group e-mails will not be used as a forum to post grades.

10. Distance Education courses offered through the Virtual College of Texas (VCT) must be approved by the appropriate faculty member and division chair prior to being offered to Lee College students.


## VII. Course Definitions, Hardware, and the Learning Management System

### Face-to-Face (FO)

These courses are traditional synchronous, on campus, that provide face-to-face instruction in a traditional classroom on campus. However, courses may be enriched by the addition of an online component. This online component is hosted on the Blackboard. Face-to-face courses may contain as little as 1% to as much as 50% of instruction in Blackboard.  All classes include the maintenance of a gradebook and the posting of the course syllabus in Blackboard Learn so students can access their grades/syllabus at any time during the semester.

### Hybrid (HY)

Hybrid or blended courses are a combination of synchronous and asynchronous instruction. Students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for a majority (more than 50%, but less than 85%) of the instructional time.

Typically, hybrid courses combine online and classroom components. Orientations may occur before the course's start date. The course syllabus will contain a section delineating the integration between face-to-face and online instruction. Additionally, it will discuss how the online environment connects and supports the classroom activities. Students must have Internet access, understand and be able to use email and the web, create and save documents in specific file formats and upload files as an attachment.

### Online (OL)

Online courses are asynchronous.  Students and instructors are NOT in the same physical setting more than 85% of the instructional time. Some courses may require face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15% of the instructional time. This could include orientations, labs, proctored tests, field trips and/or other course requirements. Orientations may occur before the course's start date. Face-to-face requirements will be listed in the course syllabus. Faculty must have Internet access, understand and be able to use email and the web, create and save documents in specific file formats, and upload files as an attachment.

The following chart/figure illustrates the official difference between a face-to-face, hybrid and online course and some type of Teaching Online Certification and Blackboard training which are both "**required**" for instructors to have completed in order to teach online or hybrid courses.

### Figure 1. Understanding the Difference Between Face-to-face, Hybrid and Online

| Teaching Online Certification & Blackboard Training | Delivery Method for Courses | Class Schedule Symbol | 0% Instruction Outside of Class | 50% Instruction Outside of Class | 100% Instruction Outside of Class |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not Required | Face-to-Face | FO01 | All content **CAN BE** in Blackboard. 1%-50% Instruction in Blackboard.<br><br>e.g., Class meets face-to-face as scheduled in the semester unless otherwise stated by the instructor. | | |
| Required | Hybrid | HO01 | | All content **MUST** be in Blackboard 51%-84% Instruction in Blackboard.<br><br>e.g., Class will meet face-to-face 7 times or less in a 15-week semester course. | |
| | Online | OL01 | | | All content **MUST** be in Blackboard. 85%-100% Instruction in Blackboard.<br><br>e.g., Class will meet face-to-face only once in any type of course session/semester. |

### Hardware/Software requirements

Browser:
PC Users: Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer* (Better results with Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome)
MAC Users: Safari, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome

Operating System:
PC Users: -, Windows 7, 8 or 10-
MAC Users: OSX 10.6 or higher

Pop-up blockers need to be set to allow pop-ups from the LMS site (https://elearn.lee.edu/).

Cookies should be set to "Allow" from elearn.lee.edu.

Additional information can be found at the Blackboard help page:

**_Blackboard Learn Help Homepage_**

Blackboard Learn Help Homepage

Blackboard Learn Help Browser Support

**_Learning Management System (LMS)_**

All faculty members must use the college's approved Learning Management System (LMS), Blackboard Learn9.1. Any use of alternative learning management systems or publisher provided sites must be linked in Blackboard. Examples of these could be Pearson MyLab, Cengage Mind-Link, My Math Lab, McGraw-Hill Connect, etc.

## VIII. Online Attendance Policies

In a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. A school must demonstrate that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion or initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question... – *FSA Handbook 2017-18, Volume 5, p. 61.*
In order to comply with this federal requirement, Lee College Distance Education offers the following process for documenting attendance when students are enrolled in distance education courses:
Documentation that a student has logged into an online course is not sufficient to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. To show academic attendance, the student must complete some type of "academically related" activity in the course. Academically related activity is demonstrated by participating in an online discussion forum related to the content in the course or initiating contact with the instructor to ask a question about content in the course (see below for additional examples). This participation must occur no later than the college's official published census date.
If the instructor determines a student has not logged in and participated in an academically related activity as described above, prior to the census date, the student has not attended the class. Therefore, the instructor should leave the student's name unchecked on the census roster and that student will be administratively dropped by Admissions and Records (no form completion required).

Beyond the census date, an instructor **MAY** submit a drop request to Admissions and Records, if a student does not complete an academically-related activity as scheduled by the instructor, during a ten calendar day period in a sixteen week semester or the equivalent in a shorter session. The

faculty member has the option to use the ten-day minimum calendar period or **MAY** determine the number of days appropriate as aligned with the current attendance policy in a face-to-face class of three sessions or three hours. If a student is dropped, a "W" will be recorded on the student's transcript. Faculty will indicate their attendance policy for an online, hybrid, or face-to-face class in each course syllabus.

Academically related activities include, but are not limited to:
- physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students;
- submitting an academic assignment;
- taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction;
- attending a study group that is assigned by the school;
- participating in an online discussion about academic matters or
- initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically related activities do NOT include activities where a student may be present, but not academically engages, such as:
- logging into an online class without active participation or
- participating in academic counseling or advisement.

## IX. Academic Support Referral (ASR) – Early Alert

**What is an ASR?**

- Academic Early Alert service provided through the Advising/Counseling Center
- Link located in MyLCCampus class rosters
- Distributed to student's advisor
- Goal is resolution/student contact within 2 business days

**When to submit an ASR**

- Excessive absences
- Low test scores
- Missing assignments

**Lessons Learned**

- Best results when instructor talks with student first
- Early submission allows for intervention and impact
- Best for isolated incidents, not classroom-wide intervention

Class Roster

Spring 2015 | Thirteen Week | Lee College | Credit
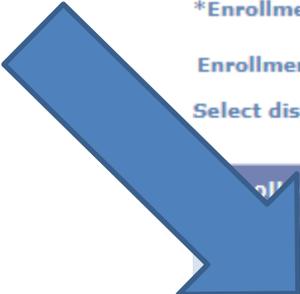
▽ **SPCH 1315 - F061 (7597)**   [ change class ]

Principles of Public Speaking (Lecture)

| Days and Times | Room | Instructor | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tu 6:00PM-9:40PM | ATC 348 | Sarah Tidwell | 01/30/2015 - 05/07/2015 |

**\*Enrollment Status**   [ Enrolled ▼ ]

**Enrollment Capacity** 25   **Enrolled** 19

**Select display option:**   ◉ Link to Photos   ○ Include photos in list

Enrolled Students

| | | ASR | Photo | ID | Name | Add Dt | Drop Dt | Status | Reason |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ☐ | asr | 🔍 | ▬▬▬ | ▬▬▬ | 01/12/2015 | | E | ENRL |
| 2 | ☐ | asr | 🔍 | ▬▬▬ | ▬▬▬ | 01/28/2015 | | E | ENRL |
| 3 | ☐ | asr | 🔍 | ▬▬▬ | ▬▬▬ | 01/14/2015 | | E | ENRL |

**Questions or Concerns?**

Marissa Moreno, MSW                                    Sarah Tidwell, M.A.
mmoreno@lee.edu                                        stidwell@lee.edu

# X. Best Practices

## Principle 1: Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact

Instructors should provide clear guidelines for interaction with students in their course syllabus. Instructors should establish policies describing the types of communication that should take place over different channels.

Some examples for the **"Interaction Plan"** are:

- "Do not send technical support questions to the instructor. Contact the Lee College helpdesk at: 281-425-6952."

- "The public discussion forum is to be used for all communications except grade-related questions."
- Set clear standards for instructors' timelines for responding to messages. Examples: "I will make every effort to respond to e-mail within 24 hours of receiving it" or "I will respond to e-mails on Tuesdays and Fridays between three and five o'clock."

## Principle 2: Good Practice Encourages Cooperation among Students

Well-designed discussion assignments facilitate meaningful cooperation among students.

To encourage meaningful participation in asynchronous online discussions:
- Learners should be required to participate (and their grade should depend on participation).
- A clear and detailed discussion prompt should be provided.
- Discussion groups should remain small.
- Discussions should be focused on a task.
- Tasks should always result in a product.
- Learners should receive feedback on their discussions.
- Evaluation should be based on the quality of postings (and not the length or number).
- Instructors should post expectations/rubrics for discussions.

## Principle 3: Good Practice Encourages Active Learning

Students should present course projects.

Projects are often an integral part of face -to-face courses. Students learn valuable skills from presenting their projects and are often motivated to perform at a higher level. Students also learn a great deal from seeing and discussing their peers' work. While formal synchronous presentations may not be practical online, instructors can still provide synchronous opportunities for projects to be shared and discussed asynchronously.

## Principle 4: Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback

Instructors need to provide feedback and describe a feedback plan in their course syllabus that states when the instructor will give feedback to the students for each type of assignment/test and what type of feedback can be expected.

There are two kinds of feedback that online instructors need to provide:
1. "Information feedback" and
2. "Acknowledgement feedback."

Information feedback provides information or evaluation, such as an answer to a question, or an assignment grade and constructive critique/comments.

Acknowledgement feedback confirms some event has occurred. For example, the instructor may send an email acknowledging he or she has received a question or assignment and will respond soon.

## Principle 5: Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task

Online courses need deadlines.

Regularly distributed deadlines encourage students to spend time on tasks and help students with busy schedules avoid procrastination. E.g., Deadline for a discussion forum for "original post" and a deadline for "reply posts". Distributed deadlines also provide a context for regular contact with the instructor and peers.

## Principle 6: Good Practice Communicates High Expectations

Challenging tasks, sample cases, and praise for quality work communicate high expectations.

Communicating high expectations for student performance is essential. There are various ways for instructors to communicate high expectations. Here are some examples:
- Give challenging assignments.
- Provide examples or models for students to follow, along with comments explaining why the examples are good or bad.
- Create rubrics with criteria for assignments/discussions and detailed explanations of how students can meet the expectations in each criteria.
- Do you want your students to log on daily? Do they need to submit assignments in a certain place, a certain format and a certain time? Do you have late submission policies? A course introduction either through a "start here/read first/Begin here" folder or a face-to-face or Blackboard Collaborate online course orientation would be a great way to communicate some key expectations in the course?
- Finally, publicly praising exemplary work communicates high expectations. Instructors do this by calling attention to insightful or well-presented student postings or answers.

## Principle 7: Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning

Allowing students to choose project topics incorporates diverse views into online courses.

As instructors give students a voice in selecting their own topics for course projects, they encourage students to express their own diverse points of view. Instructors can provide guidelines to help students select topics relevant to the course while still allowing students to share their

unique perspectives. While there will undoubtedly be some text-based content in an online course but there are creative ways to encourage different ways of learning. E.g., Instead of assigning a ten-page paper, have students create a video where they demonstrate what they've learned.

### Principle 8: Good Practice Involves Meeting the requirements of Title II & III of ADA

Meeting accessibility standards under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and WCAG 2.0 A & AA standards must be considered in the development of online courses including documents, photos, video clips, links, and any other materials. For additional information refer to the Universal Design for Accessibility content folder in the Faculty Resources course or contact the Distance Education Coordinator, Dr. Laura Lane-Worley at distanceed@lee.edu or 281-425-6265.

**Another source for reference is *Building from Content to Community: [Re] Thinking the Transition to Online Teaching and Learning* – a CTE White Paper, Britt Watwood, Jeffrey Nugent and William "Bud" Deihl. This paper presents very good information and examples/scenarios and tools faculty can use to build a course and interact with students. It is worth the read.

## XI. What to do Before, During, and After the Course

*Before the semester begins..................*

- The course must be fully developed in the college's LMS and have all due dates and meeting times set before the semester begins.

- Textbook requests must be on file with the division chair and submitted to the book store, using the same procedures as on-campus courses.

- The documents and information within the course must be common file types that are ADA accessible.

- The syllabus and any first day handouts must be posted in Blackboard before the first day of class, and submitted to the division chair

- The faculty member and division chair must ensure the curriculum and course content is consistent with the curriculum in face-to-face courses.

- For faculty who use face-to-face orientation meetings, set a date, time, and reserve a classroom for the orientation with the division secretary.

*During the semester...................*

- The faculty members must have an orientation within the first week of the course for all online learners to attend. The orientation may be online or face-to-face.

- Once the official class rolls are due, any student who has not been active in the course, and has not contacted the instructor, may be dropped.

- All course-related communication must go through Lee College's LMS

- Establish contact with students at the beginning of the semester and maintain regular communication throughout the term. Communication will employ all suitable means including discussion boards, e-mail, individualized chat sessions, (including online "office hours"), telephone, face-to-face communication, etc.

- Respond to student's voice mail and e-mail messages within 2 working days, excluding weekends and Lee College-recognized holidays.

- Once the grade rosters open at the end of the semester, faculty must enter the grades before noon Friday of the final week.

*After the semester...............*

Once a semester has ended, a best practice is to create an archive (backup) of your course(s). It is also recommended you download a copy of your grade center to have as an archive. Courses are maintained on the server for 5 terms before they are archived off. These courses are only available to faculty once the semester has ended. If a course needs to be extended due to Incompletes, then the faculty member needs to contact the LMS System Administrator for directions.

## XII. Teaching Online Certification for Faculty

All instructors who teach Online (OL) and Hybrid (HY) courses must have proof of Teaching Online Certification obtained through Lee College or from an approved outside source. If an instructor chooses to use the in-house training, Lee College offers a certification course:

The Distance Education course is delivered through Blackboard Learn. This course allows instructors to experience the course as if they were the student while learning best practices and suggestions for online teaching. It guides the student through exercises using multiple types of media and different ways to interact with the teacher. Contact Rashmi Chhetri at 832-556-4042 or rchhetri@lee.edu

If an instructor is already certified from an outside source, all information must be submitted to the Distance Education Committee for approval. Alternate certification could

include having a degree in something like Instructional Technology, or completion of online certification at another accredited community college or accredited university.

Once faculty members have earned their certification or been approved by the committee, they are required to submit evidence of certification to Human Resources.  This documentation will be recorded in People-Soft and be in the faculty member's permanent file.

Once training is completed, please be sure to print proof of completion including certificates or other documentation and provide that to Human Resources where it will be copied and placed in the faculty member's file.

## XIII. Blackboard Training

The Lee College Office of Information Technology will provide a 6-part, introduction to Blackboard training every fall semester, spring semester, and summer 10-week session.  This training explores the nuts and bolts of the college LMS, including how to set up your course, communication tools, assessments, rubrics, grade book, etc.

For more information, contact Paula Lee at 281-425-6285 or plee@lee.edu

For more experienced faculty, the Office of Information Technology will offer training on more advanced Blackboard tools, such as Respondus, Soft-Chalk, Collaborate, etc.  The Distance Education Coordinator will work with the division chairs and IT Office to identify faculty needs.

## XIV. Library Services

The online library can be accessed at Lee College library.

The library offers many resources to faculty and students, including e-books, Films on Demand, articles from online databases, and electronic course reserves. Librarians are available online to provide assistance to students through interactive tutorials, "Ask a Librarian" email service, and live chats.  Librarians can create tutorials specific to your course upon request.  Online resources can also be embedded into your Blackboard course.

For more information, contact Will Mayer at 832-556-4017 or wmayer@lee.edu

## XV. Evaluation and Professional Development

Distance Education faculty will be evaluated by their respective division chairs in a manner consistent with faculty who teach traditional or face-to-face courses. However, Distance Education faculty will set an annual goal to improve their skills in online or hybrid education. Goals can be met through on campus training, professional development day, travel to professional conferences, or additional coursework at another college or university. The faculty members will work with their division chairs to identify appropriate goals.

The Distance Education Committee has a professional development budget for travel to professional conferences. For additional information, please contact Dr. Laura Lane-Worley, the Distance Education Coordinator, at 281-425-6265 or distanceed@lee.edu .

## XVI. Program Assessment

Every 5 years, the Distance Education Coordinator will conduct a program review to evaluate the overall quality of Distance Education at the college. The review will assess the program on an institutional level. Topics will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Completion Rates
2) Technology Needs
3) Faculty Training and Professional Development
4) Student Preparation
5) Institutional Support
6) Counseling and Advising
7) Governance and Policy Making

8) VCT (Virtual College of Texas)

## XVII. VCT (Virtual College of Texas)

The Virtual College of Texas is a collaborative effort among community colleges in the state of Texas. If a student is unable to register for a class at their local community college, they can register for an online class at another community college through VCT. For more information, visit the Virtual College of Texas website.

VCT courses from another community college can be offered at Lee College. However, the appropriate dean, appropriate division chair, and appropriate lead instructor must approve the course before a student can register for the course.

Lee College faculty can place their online courses on VCT, but they must go through the VCT course approval process. Faculty should also be aware VCT students can be located anywhere in the state of Texas, so they should plan accordingly, especially if they require proctored testing, field work, or lab work.

For more information, contact Dr. Donnetta Suchon, Vice President of Student Affairs at 281-425-6400 or dsuchon@lee.edu

## XVIII. Disaster Preparation

Living on the coast presents unique challenges. When a hurricane hits, the college could experience a lengthy shut down, as it did during Hurricane Ike. Since that time, the college has put generators in place to help keep mission critical systems up and running. Some of the systems that have been deemed as mission critical include PeopleSoft and Blackboard Learn.

As an instructor, whether you teach online or traditional face-to-face classes, use of Blackboard Learn is required during possible shut downs or closures as a way to continue to interact with students and keep the class work moving forward. Some of the ways you can accomplish this is to have your syllabus posted, create folders to house your lecture notes, Power Point presentations, videos, etc., you want students to work through. You can also create assignments and tests for students.

Blackboard Learn is an acceptable delivery method, regardless of whether you or your students had to evacuate, to keep the classes going during the emergency. Some possible ways to handle informing students about this possibility could be to add a statement to the syllabus that lets students know to check Blackboard. You could also include it in a course orientation.

The question is what will you do before the emergency happens? Emergencies could also include unexpected health or family issues. If you can prepare now, it will be less traumatic if/when something actually happens.

## XIX. FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)

### 1. What is Blackboard Learn?

Blackboard, Inc. is a company that develops Learning Management Systems. Blackboard Learn (Bb Learn) is a product that falls under Blackboard. It is a self-contained place to present content to students. Bb Learn can be used in a variety of manners, i.e. online or hybrid instruction, to enhance a traditional class, as a community for users such as the drafting community or the nursing community, honor societies, or Faculty Learning Communities to post information relevant to all its members. The advantage of using such a system is that it is self-contained and therefore sensitive information is not accessible to unauthorized users.

### 2. How do I get a class setup in Bb Learn?

Faculty members are responsible for creating their Bb Learn course shells in myLC Campus. The directions for this process are located in the Help Documents folder located in Bb Learn Faculty Resource Course or you can contact Paula Lee, [plee@lee.edu](mailto:plee@lee.edu) and she will send you a copy of the word document.

### 3. Who do I contact for instructional design questions?

Rashmi Chhetri is the Instructional Designer. She will help you with the best practices in the layout and presentation of the material to the students. Her contact information is: [rchhetri@lee.edu](mailto:rchhetri@lee.edu) or 832-556-4042. Her office is on the first floor of John Britt Hall 124.

### 4. Who do I call when things don't work in Bb Learn?

You can contact Paula Lee, [plee@lee.edu](mailto:plee@lee.edu). You can contact the Help Desk at 281-425-6577. Please let your students know this as well.

### 5. How do I login to Bb Learn?

Your username and password will be the same one you use to login to your Lee College email or onto one of the campus computers.

### 6. What exactly does Bb Learn offer?

Bb Learn gives instructors a container for their course material. Some of the features inside Bb Learn include discussion boards, blogs, wikis and journals, ability to create assignments and assessments, web links, modules, embed videos or audio files, a home page with information, notifications, etc. for your student's use. There is a grade center and your students have a My Grades link where they can view posted grades, upcoming items, etc. Another feature inside of Bb Learn is SafeAssign, which is an anti-plagiarism program.

### 7. What other resources do instructors have access to?

Lee College is part of the Virtual College of Texas. As a member we have access to SoftChalk, which is a lesson builder software. We also have Respondus, which is a Windows-based authoring tool that makes it easy to create and manage exams for Bb Learn. Lee College also has access to Films on Demand. Will Mayer, Librarian, Distance Education & e-resources, is the point of contact for Films on Demand, [wmayer@lee.edu](mailto:wmayer@lee.edu) .

### 8. What about training?

Bb Learn training is ongoing throughout the year. Emails are sent out to let faculty know when trainings will occur. You can always contact Paula Lee or Rashmi Chhetri for additional information or help.

### 9. Is there any training or orientation for students?

Yes. There is an Online Student Orientation Bb Learn class, to which students have access. The student should see the link for this course when they login to Bb Learn. It is set up like an actual course might be. The object is to help students become familiar with Bb Learn before they actually begin their true course. All First Time in College students who attend Fall or Spring Kick Off participate in a face-to-face Blackboard Orientation.

### 10. When are Bb Learn classes available?

The Bb Learn classes are always available for instructors. Instructors can hide the courses they do not want to see in their course list or they can request to have them removed from Bb Learn. Backups are created and maintained by the LMS System Administrator. However, instructors are encouraged to create their own backups as well, at the end of each semester. The current year and the previous year's courses remain active on the server. Courses that are a year old will be archived and removed from the server.

Students will not be able to access their Bb Learn classes until the first day of the semester. The Bb Learn classes remain visible to the students for about a week after the semester ends. If the instructor needs a class to remain open for students who received an "I", then the instructor needs to contact Paula Lee, plee@lee.edu, to have the course dates extended.

### 11. What do I need to do in order to teach a HY or OL class?

Full-time and adjunct faculty who want to be certified to teach in a HY or OL environment must complete the Teaching Online Certification Course or provide verification of completion of an online verification course from another institution. Contact Rashmi Chhetri (rchhetri@lee.edu) for more information. Beyond the Teaching Online Certification Course, training in Blackboard Learn could prove helpful. Working with the Instructional Designer to layout the course would be a good idea.

### 12. What about accessibility?

All materials in Blackboard Learn must be accessible. Videos must have captions and transcripts. Images, tables, diagrams, content maps, etc. providing additional meaning or learning opportunities for students must have alternative text descriptions to ensure all students have

access to the same content. The Universal Design for Accessibility content folder in the Faculty Resources course in Blackboard provides multiple resources and how to videos. For additional assistance contact Dr. Laura Lane-Worley, Distance Education Coordinator (distanceed@lee.edu - 281-425-6265).

## XX. Netiquette

The Internet provides numerous opportunities for users to connect, conduct business transactions, get an education, keep in touch with others, and other things. The Internet also has its own culture.  And just like any other culture, there are "rules of etiquette' people should be aware of and follow. For the Internet, there are rules of Netiquette, or basically, the etiquette rules for cyberspace. Believe it or not, there are, actually, rules for how to behave properly online.

Virginia Shea has written a book titled *Netiquette* that discusses the core rules of netiquette. You can use this link to read more extensively about Netiquette: The Core Rules of Netiquette. She lists 10 rules to help people behave properly in an online world.

One thing to always remember is this: once a person puts something online, whether it is an email, document or comments or videos, it is always online. You can delete it off your account or machine, but it is more than likely backed up on some server somewhere in the world and can be accessed again by someone.

## XXI. Employee Portal

There is a Distance Education Committee listing in the employee portal entitled "Distance Education Committee".  The Distance Education Committee folder houses all of the committee meeting agenda and minutes as well as other information pertinent to distance education.
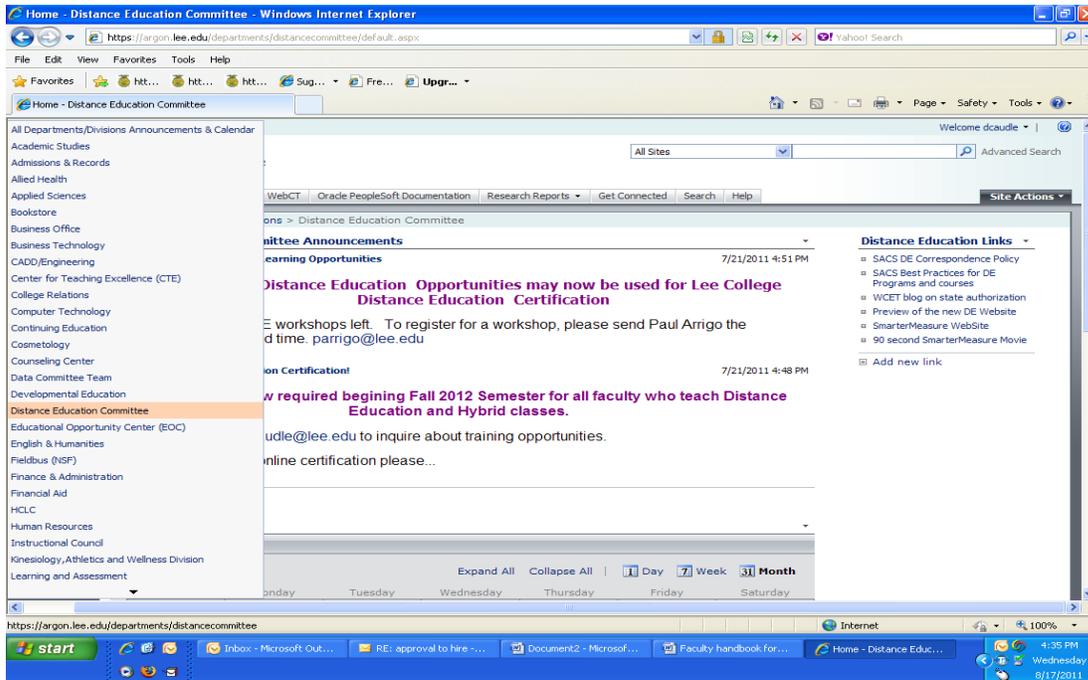
Once in the Employee portal click the "Departments/Division" button for the drop down menu, then pick "Distance Education Committee"