

# Blended Learning: Executive Summary of the Simmons College Policies (September, 2008)

## 1. Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Needs

- Articulate a **model and processes** for creating and sustaining blended courses.
- Ensure **adequate resources** for faculty/students and sufficient fluency to succeed in blended learning contexts.
- Augment/improve the **system of technical support**.
- Increase/improve **access to instructional design** consultation.
- Develop a College-wide strategy for **research and data-gathering** to demonstrate the outcomes and effectiveness.

### Technology, TechGov, and ATC Action Steps

- Technology develops a portfolio of resources for faculty and students, including a blended learning institute (to be offered twice annually in the months of June and January), eLearning software workshops, and course “building party” sessions
- Technology provides instructional design and instructional technology consultation for institute/workshop graduates
- Technology collaborates with faculty to adapt the University of Central Florida’s assessment model for use at Simmons
- ATC sponsors Blended Learning Faculty Interest Group
- TechGov investigates and recommends strategies for ensuring student access, including access for students who face the digital divide

### College-Wide Policies

- Deans require all first time blended teachers to complete a three-day intensive Institute prior to developing a blended course (exceptions require dean pre-approval). Faculty teaching blended courses must attend workshops during major eLearning upgrades.
- Faculty experienced in blended are to be compensated for peer mentoring (e.g., giving Institute presentations and online feedback during the Institute).
- Schools implement systems for assessing/achieving baseline student fluency.
- Schools set goals for blended course development and redesign across the curriculum. Curriculum committees develop strategic plans for achieving goals.

## 2. Business Case Needs

- Conduct a **Needs Analysis** before committing to the development of new blended programs.
- Develop strategies for the **internal and external marketing** of blended programs.
- A **cost model** should be incorporated into each school’s model for blended course development and support.

### Technology TechGov, and ATC Action Steps

- Technology collaborates with Marketing to develop strategies for increasing visibility of and enrollment in blended programs
- Technology collaborates with the Registrar to identify blended courses in Colleague

### College-Wide Policies

- A formal Needs Analysis is to be conducted prior to developing new blended programs.
- Cost model includes market-competitive compensation and 1:17-20 student/faculty ratio (AI inclusive).
- Faculty members receive financial incentives during the next 3 years, to be phased out as blended course design and teaching become an assumed part of the faculty role/workload. Compensation will be calculated on a per credit hour basis based on precedent and budgetary considerations in the respective schools, typically \$600-700 per credit hour.
- Budget a 4-5 year course lifecycle for major redesigns.

## 3. Institutional Policy Needs

- Define and author clear **copyright** guidelines regarding the faculty use of scholarly articles, as well as images, video and other digital media.
- Draft policies, set college-wide expectations, and provide resources for addressing the **accessibility** needs of students, staff, and faculty in relationship to blended courses.
- Articulate and ensure achievement of college-wide and program-specific **student fluencies**.
- Ensure **adequate faculty compensation and professional recognition** for blended course development and teaching.
- **Provide an infrastructure** that can accommodate, as well as reap the benefits of, the flexible scheduling and support associated with blended courses.

### Technology, TechGov, and ATC Action Steps

- Technology collaborates with College Counsel to update Copyright Policy and Intellectual Property Policies
- Technology collaborates with the Center for Academic Achievement to develop and support policies for accessibility
- Technology collaborates with the Registrar, Library, and Student Financial Services on services and policies to support blended courses
- ATC identifies the student fluency policies that schools have in place

### College-Wide Policies

- College Counsel updates intellectual property guidelines to take into account blended courses.
- ADA compliance officer and work group develops mandated standards for blended and online courses; resources are allocated for implementing standards.
- The deans and their schools explicitly recognize excellence in blended teaching and peer mentoring in tenure/promotion, allow sabbatical leave for blended course development, and count blended course authorship as a publication equal to one chapter.
- The Office of the Registrar, Technology, Library, and Financial Services collaborate to provide blended learning infrastructure and receive sufficient resources.