**CTC Procedure: Development, Approval, and Quality Assurance for Distance Education**

## Quality Assurance Rationale

Quality assurance of online courses is essential on three (3) levels:

1. **Institutional Level**. To advance and protect the reputation of the educational institution in attracting students, qualified faculty members, and collaborations with business and industry.
2. **Student Level**. To assure the student that his/her credential is recognized by prospective employers and is relevant in today’s workforce.
3. **Faculty Level**. To provide training, resources, and technical support for the development of new online courses and the maintenance of on-going online courses.

## Six-Step Process

### STEP 1 - Course Instructor/Developer Training

The course instructor/developer is trained in distance learning methodology to include related college policies and procedures, the learning management system (LMS), and related software, either by a Georgia Virtual Technical Connection (GVTC) certified trainer or the CTC Distance Learning Department. This required training must be completed before development of coursework can begin, and prior to beginning instruction of the distance course if it is to be taught by someone other than the developer.

### STEP 2 - Course Development

Prior to distance learning course development, faculty submit an Online Course Development Request form to the Director of Distance Learning at least two (2) semesters prior to the target date for delivery of the new distance course to students. After review by the Director of Distance Learning, the proposal is forwarded to the appropriate Dean for Academic Affairs and Vice President of Academic Affairs for development approval. Once approved, the course is developed based on Online Course Quality Assurance Review Rubric.

### STEP 3 - Initial Course Review

Once completed, the course is submitted to the designated reviewer(s) for approval for delivery at least one (1) semesters prior to the target date for delivery of the new distance course to students. The course is reviewed utilizing the Online Course Quality Assurance Review Rubric. The review addresses instructional design, learner assessment, technology, and course content ensuring the course is aligned with the Technical College System of Georgia’s (TCSG) standards. Once approved by the reviewer(s), Dean, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the Director of Distance Learning, the new distance course can be added to the course schedule for the next semester.

### STEP 4 - Course Delivery

The course is piloted and student participants are surveyed for feedback. The Course Interactions Checklist is used on a weekly basis to evaluate interactions between the instructor and students, between students and the course content, and between students and their peers. This should occur the semester immediately following the new distance course’s approval.

### STEP 5 - Course/Instructor Evaluation

During initial delivery of the course, the Director of Distance Learning and appropriate Dean for Academic Affairs use the Course Interactions Checklist to ensure that the course is being presented appropriately based upon its design and recommended best practices. An Online Course Student Satisfaction Survey, an Online Course Instructor Evaluation, and an Instructor Self-Review are administered during the last week of classes during the initial course delivery semester to determine instructional strengths and weaknesses and to establish improvement plans if needed. The instructor is responsible for implementing any improvement plan; and the Director of Distance Learning or appropriate Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for the follow-up review. The Director of Distance Learning uses these results in planning for overall improvement in the online delivery of courses. Also, Student Learning Outcome (SLO) data is collected and evaluated in accordance with the CTC Procedure: Institutional Effectiveness. The SLOs in online courses are the same as those in traditional courses.

### STEP 6 - Periodic Review

Periodic reviews are scheduled at the discretion of the Director of Distance Learning, appropriate Dean for Academic Affairs, or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Courses are reviewed by the designated reviewer(s) utilizing the Online Course Quality Assurance Review Rubric, Course Interactions Checklist, and optionally, the Blackboard Exemplary Course Program Rubric. The completed reviews are sent to the appropriate Program Chair and Dean for Academic Affairs. The Program Chairs are responsible for course revisions, and the Director of Distance Learning or appropriate Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for follow-up reviews.

### Six Step Course Development and Review Process Flow



### Online Course Quality Assurance Review Rubric

Score Scale - 4=Exemplary 3=Accomplished 2=Promising 1=Incomplete NA=Not Available for Review

| **Criteria** | **Exemplary 4** | **Accomplished 3** | **Promising 2** | **Incomplete 1** | **Not Available for Review** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Overview, syllabus and schedule.** TCSG Standard Number: 02-04-02; 02-04-04; 02-04-05; POLICY: 6.5.1; Procedure: 6.5.1pIncludes the following elements:\* Course menu and navigation are consistent with CTC Course Template\* Instructor Contact Information\* Important class meetings and assignment due dates\* Grading standards and procedures\* Student support resources and tools\* Prerequisite skills | *The course contains a thorough overview, a complete and accurate syllabus, and a detailed schedule of assignments which includes all the required elements, are all clear, concise, easy to find, and easy to understand.* | *The course contains an overview, syllabus, and schedule of assignments which include all required elements, are easy to find and understand, but may need minor edits to make them clearer or more concise.* | *The course contains an overview, syllabus, and schedule of assignments which are either incomplete, not easy to find, or difficult to understand.* | *The course contains at least one of the following items: overview, syllabus, and/or schedule of assignments.* | *A course overview, syllabus, and schedule are missing from the course.* |
| **Course objectives are clear and measureable.** SACSCOC 8.1 (Student achievement)8.2.a (Student outcomes: educational programs) 10.4 (Academic governance), 11.3 (Library and learning/information access);TCSG Standard Number: 02-05-02 | *Objectives are easily located within the course, are clearly written based upon State standards listed in KMS, reflect desired outcomes, are written in measureable terms (students know what they are expected to be able to do), and are made available in a variety of areas in the course (within the syllabus and each individual learning unit).* | *Objectives are located within the course syllabus or the individual learning units, are written to reflect desired learning outcomes, although not all are written as measureable outcomes, and students have some understanding of what is expected of them.* | *Objectives are not easily located within the course, are not clearly written in measurable learning outcomes, students may be unsure of what they are expected to be able to do, and the level does not match the desired outcomes.* | *Objectives are not easily located within the course, some are missing and others poorly written, and the level does not match the desired learning outcome.* | *Objectives are not located within the course.* |
| **Sufficient rigor, depth and breadth.** SACSCOC 8.1 (Student achievement)8.2.a (Student outcomes: educational programs); TCGS Standard Number: 02-05-01, 02-05-02, 02-05-03, 02-05-04, 02-05-05Includes the following elements:\* Organized into Study Units by topic, not weeks\* Requires higher order thinking and critical reasoning skills | *The standards and identified student learning outcomes are covered thoroughly (without extending beyond the scope of the course), all required elements are included, and assignments are completely aligned with standards to assess student learning.* | *The standards and identified student learning outcomes are covered sufficiently and/or assignments are mostly aligned with standards to assess student learning.* | *The standards and identified student learning outcomes are mostly covered and/or assignments minimally assess student learning.* | *The standards and identified student learning outcomes are not sufficiently covered and/or assignments do not fully assess student learning.* | *Content and assignments are missing from the course.* |
| **Sufficient learning resources and materials.** SACSCOC 11.3 (Library and learning/information resources access);TCSG Standard Number: 02-05-09Includes the following elements:\* Accessibility issues are addressed\* Universal Design for Learning principles are incorporated\* Unit overviews provided\* Sufficient teaching content is provided\* Learning/Practice/Study activities are provided\* Enrichment materials/activities are provided\* Relevant assessments are conducted to measure student learning of required standards | *A wide range of fully standards-aligned learning resources are provided which significantly increase student success, and all required elements are included.* | *Several learning resources are provided which increase student success, and all required elements are included.* | *Some learning resources are provided which contribute to student success.* | *Few learning resources are provided and/or those which are provided do not contribute to student success.* | *No learning resources are provided in the course.* |
| **Timely and constructive interaction.** SACSCOC 10.1 (Academic policies);TCSG Standard Number: 02-05-12Includes the following elements:\* Diversity issues are considered\* Course and content design engages students\* Student-to-student interactions are facilitated and encouraged\* Instructor-to-student interactions include direction, support, encouragement, and feedback on work in a timely manner.\* Students are continuously aware of their grades and progress | *Multiple tools and techniques are incorporated which encourage and facilitate timely and constructive interaction between students and faculty and among students, and all required elements are included.* | *More than one tool and/or technique are incorporated which encourage and/or facilitate timely and constructive interaction between students and faculty and among students, and all required elements are included,.* | *At least one tool and/or technique are incorporated which encourage and/or facilitate interaction between students and faculty and among students.* | *At least one tool and/or technique is/are incorporated which allow for but do not directly encourage timely and constructive interaction between students and faculty and among students.* | *No means of interaction between students and faculty nor among students is present in the course.* |
| **TCSG curriculum standards.** TCSG 02-05-01, 02-05-03, 02-05-05 | *All TCSG Standards (Goals) are linked within the course.* | *Almost all of the related TCSG Standards (Goals) are linked within the course.* | *Many of the related TCSG Standards (Goals) are linked within the course.* | *Few of the related TCSG Standards (Goals) are linked within the course.* | *TCSG Standards (Goals) are not linked within the course.* |
| **Use of copyrighted materials.** TCSG 03-02-01 | *Students are provided with detailed instructions and expectations related to the use of copyrighted materials in assignments. The instructor also provides detailed citations and reference information related to all copyrighted materials utilized within the course.* | *Students are provided with detailed instructions related to the use of copyrighted materials in assignments. The instructor also provides citations related to all copyrighted materials utilized within the course.* | *Students are provided with generalized instructions related to the use of copyrighted materials in assignments. The instructor also provides citations related to most copyrighted materials utilized within the course.* | *Students are provided with partial instructions related to the use of copyrighted materials in assignments.* | *Issues associated with the use of copyrighted materials are not addressed in the course.* |
| **Academic integrity and netiquette expectations.**SACSCOC 10.1 (Academic policies) | *Students are provided with detailed instructions and expectations related to academic integrity and netiquette. The instructor provides examples of acceptable netiquette, and exhibits personal adherence to the same guidelines in all interactions with students.* | *Students are provided with detailed instructions and expectations related to academic integrity and netiquette. The instructor exhibits personal adherence to the same guidelines in all interactions with students.* | *Students are provided with expectations related to academic integrity and netiquette. The instructor exhibits personal adherence to the same guidelines in all interactions with students.* | *Students are provided with some limited expectations related to academic integrity and netiquette.*  | *Academic integrity and netiquette expectations are not addressed in the course.* |
| **Assessment and assignment feedback procedures.** SACSCOC 8.1 (Student achievement)8.2.a (Student outcomes: educational programs)Includes the following elements:\* Assessments are consistent with course objectives\* Grading standards, examples, and/or rubrics are provided where needed as part of assignment and assessment instructions | *The course provides students with detailed instructions on how feedback will be communicated for each type of assessment/assignment, and sets reasonable expectations for response times.* | *The course provides students with instructions on how feedback will be communicated for each type of assessment/assignment.* | *The course provides students with generalized instructions on how feedback will be communicated.* | *The course provides students with partial information on how feedback will be communicated.* | *Feedback procedures are not provided in the course.* |

### Course Interactions Checklist

This checklist is intended to be used as a tool for observing and assessing interactions between the instructor and students, between students and the course content, and between students and their peers. This tool should be used weekly during Step 4 (Initial Delivery) of the Six-Step Process, at least once during each semester that a course is taught at a distance, and at least once as part of Step 6 (Periodic Review) of the Six-Step Process. This checklist can be used as a self-assessment tool by instructors, as well as a formal review tool by reviewers.

| **Interaction Expected** | **Observed** | **Not Observed** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Important dates communicated regularly. |  |  |
| Grading rubrics and models provided and explained as part of assignments. |  |  |
| Weekly student interaction with learning resources and materials is evident. |  |  |
| Students are regularly encouraged to interact with each other as an integral part of instruction. |  |  |
| Student inquiries to instructor are responded to within 1 business day. |  |  |
| Students are continuously made aware of progress towards course goals and objectives, and of their overall grade. |  |  |
| Universal Design principles and respect are applied in all interactions. |  |  |
| Student work is graded within 7 days of submission. |  |  |
| Assessment and assignment feedback is provided with grades. |  |  |
| Comments:  |

### Instructor Self-Review

Instructors are one of the most valuable sources for information about the quality of the course curriculum and effectiveness of instructor training and support. Instructors should conduct a self-review of their courses before the start of each term, using the CTC Online Course Quality Assurance Review Rubric, the Course Interactions Checklist, and optionally the Blackboard Exemplary Course Rubric. The following questions should be used to provide insight on curriculum enhancement and creation of ongoing professional development opportunities. Please use these questions as a vehicle to critically examine your experiences in these areas and turn this in with your Instructor Evaluation.

Please consider these follow-up questions carefully:

1. Do you have suggestions about how to improve the content or presentation of the core course curriculum?
2. Describe one or two aspects of your instruction this term (interaction with students, facilitation of weekly threaded discussions, supplemental content additions, etc.) that you feel are indicative of your strengths as an online instructor.
3. Create a priority list of your plans for improving your facilitation of this course and encouraging your overall professional growth as an online instructor. How will you carry out these plans?

#### Reference

GVTC Manual, Quality Assurance of Online Courses, September 2011

Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, Volume VIII, Number III, Fall 2005.

Blackboard Exemplary Course Rubric, 2017

Adopted:

Implemented: