Distance Education Faculty Handbook
(an Addendum to the CTC Faculty Handbook)

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Preface

The CTC Faculty Handbook provides general information for all CTC Faculty. It is available at Faculty Resources under the Faculty & Staff tab at the CTC website at http://www.ctcd.edu. This CTC Distance Education Faculty Handbook serves as an addendum to the CTC Faculty Handbook by addressing relevant information, policies, and procedures for teaching distance education courses for Central Texas College. Thus, the two documents complement one another.

The Distance Education and Educational Technology Department (DEET) is dedicated to providing the assistance you need as a distance education instructor to allow you to do what you do best--teach. Check out the information at our website at http://online.ctcd.edu or contact us at course.support@ctcd.edu for solutions, suggestions, or reassurance. Technical support is available 24/7/365. Find instructions at the Tech Support Quick Link at the DEET website, email de.techsupport@ctcd.edu, or call 1-866-350-4729.

DEET coordinates with the CTC Human Resources Training Office to provide applicable training to enhance your effectiveness as an instructor, so look for training opportunities that interest you. You can check the CTC HR Training Schedule or the DEET website. If you don’t see what you want, suggest topics by contacting david.wyman@ctcd.edu or course.support@ctcd.edu.
1. **Central Texas College (CTC)**

Central Texas College (CTC) is a two-year public institution accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award certificates of completion and associate degrees in academic, professional, and vocational/technical fields. Some people are surprised that Central Texas College has operations beyond Central Campus at Killeen, TX.

Central Texas College serves more than 150 locations on or near military installations and on board ships. For information about CTC’s worldwide operations, please explore the CTC website at [http://www.ctcd.edu](http://www.ctcd.edu). We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the student resources as well as the faculty resources to ensure that you provide accurate guidance to your students.

2. **Distance Education and Educational Technology (DEET)**

In addition to offering lecture courses at various locations around the world and even on board Navy ships and submarines, CTC has a large distance education program that allows students to choose from more than 30 online

- two-year degree programs
- certificate programs.

The Distance Education and Educational Technology (DEET) Department at CTC is charged with

- developing, delivering, maintaining, and evaluating distance education courses.
- providing technical services and support to students, faculty, and staff regardless of location.

DEET does NOT hire faculty or provide textbooks and other materials to faculty.

To learn more about DEET and for details about most items discussed in this handbook, please visit our website at [http://online.ctcd.edu](http://online.ctcd.edu). For questions about courses, email course.support@ctcd.edu. Students may email prof.deets@ctcd.edu.

3. **Course Development, Revision, and Maintenance**

The Distance Education and Educational Technology (DEET) Department supports a variety of course delivery methods

- Online—scheduled as OLL or OSL
- Blended—scheduled as OBL
- Lecture (face-to-face or “traditional”)—scheduled as LEC
• Multimedia courses

Read more about these delivery methods at the Course Information tab at the DEET website.

DEET Instructional Design Specialists and Course Developers collaborate with Course Reviewers, qualified and experienced faculty assigned by Department Chairmen, to develop, revise, or maintain master courses. These master courses are based on the published departmental syllabi, using the specified course outcomes and instructional materials. Go to the DEET website at http://online.ctcd.edu for a complete description of the process, to include timelines and forms.

Each master course goes through a four-step Quality Assurance (QA) process and is approved by the appropriate Department Chairman or his/her designee before the content is copied for individual instructors.

When a new or revised master is approved, DEET staff copy the content for all faculty teaching that particular course. Once an instructor teaches the course, DEET staff will copy his/her content with the changes he/she have made into his/her next course. Because this handbook is for faculty, we will use “you” for the rest of this document.

• Courses are copied and available to faculty approximately one month prior to the course start date. You will receive an email stating that the course is ready for review/update. DO NOT make changes to course until you receive this email.
• If your course does not have content or does not have the proper content, contact course.support@ctcd.edu.
• Be aware of any course assignment limits and notify your supervisor immediately if you are approaching a limit.

4. Distance Education Faculty

Distance Education courses are taught by fulltime and adjunct faculty who must meet instructional personnel qualification and approval procedures described in the Central Texas College District Human Resource Management Operating Policies and Procedures Manual. Faculty are hired and assigned classes by CTC Departments, Campuses, or Sites.

Teaching online requires basic technical skills. Evaluate yourself at the “Am I Ready to Use Technology to Teach Classes” Quiz at the Faculty & Staff page of the DEET website. While there, check out the self assessments for prospective distant learners

• Am I ready for distance education?
• What’s my learning style?
• Do I have the technical requirements?
Teaching online is not for everyone. A good lecture instructor is not always a good online instructor; and conversely, a good online instructor may not be a good lecture instructor. Of course, there are a few individuals who are not good in either environment, but we hope that doesn’t apply to you.

All students deserve the best education possible. You must have the dedication and motivation to ensure that this happens in your online courses. It’s important to remember that the learner should be engaged with the course content. With the technology that is available, an online (virtual) learning experience can be comparable to a traditional classroom experience.

## 5. Course Implementation, Management, and Best Practices

To ensure that standard and consistent services are provided to all CTC students, online faculty are required to follow Institution policies and communications from supervisors and CTC administrators.

The following checklist outlines minimal faculty responsibilities. This list does not include specific departmental requirements and is not all inclusive. An abbreviated checklist is provided at the Faculty Resources Quick Link at the DEET website. Also, read the DEET Newsletter archives at the Faculty & Staff page of the DEET website for quick tips and current events.

### 5.1 Prior to Course Start

These tasks should be completed prior to student access. Remember that students get access to the courses 72 hours before the posted course start date.

- **CTC policies require that the same materials are used for each course regardless of delivery system.** Check the instructional materials list to ensure that you have the proper and current items for the course and that the course content you receive is for the correct materials.
  - If not, request or order them within four weeks prior to the term start date.
  - If you have questions about materials, consult your supervisor.

- **Check the scheduled course delivery method (OLL, OSL, or OBL) and the course start and end dates and ensure that your course schedule and assignments comply.** Remember that your classes must meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board definitions which are repeated here for your convenience:
  - A fully distance education course is defined as "A course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test." Most CTC online courses have no mandatory f2f sessions.
  - A hybrid/blended course is defined as "A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent), of the planned instruction occurs when the
students and instructor(s) are not in the same place." This means that you must meet with your students at least 15% of the designated contact hours for your course. In general a three-semester hour course corresponds to 48 contact hours and a four-semester hour course corresponds to 64 contact hours. See the CTC Catalog for details.

- Properly update courses three weeks prior to the start date after notification that your course is ready for updates. Your courses must be finalized prior to student access. Do not make major changes once the courses start.
  - Ensure that your contact information is provided. Include your CTC email account and your department's toll-free phone numbers.
  - Remove old announcements and change the dates of announcements that remain valid.
  - Enter deadlines into the course schedule. (These are recommended deadlines for self-paced courses.) Class lengths are automatically adjusted for the following breaks, and you should not require student participation during these times.
    - A “Silent Week” in December for Blackboard upgrades.
    - Spring Break.
  - Verify that the grade center reflects the grading policy in your syllabus; e.g., points and totals are correct.
  - To ensure that your course complies with CTC and accrediting agency standards, regulatory requirements, and best practices, refer to the CTC/DEET Course Checklist for details on how the master course was created and how your course should be set up. This Course Checklist is at the Faculty & Staff tab of the DEET website.
  - If your course is subject to a quality assurance check, respond with the recommended corrections or changes or an explanation as to why they were not made within the specified time period (generally three days).

- Ensure that items you may have edited in or added to your course meet ADA, copyright, and usability regulations.
  - Copyright compliance: the online Copyright Clearance Center at http://copyright.com. We suggest that you view the short videos on Copyright Basics and Copyright on Campus at http://www.copyright.com/content/cc3/en/toolbar/education/resources.html

- Synchronize any publisher products, such as McGraw-Hill's Connect, or create a course, such as for Prentice Hall's MyMathLab. Include any required access codes or course IDs, instructions on how to use the product, and sources for technical support in your course.

- If you are using SafeAssign, a plagiarism tool for written assignments, be sure to synchronize for your new class. Refer to the instructions at the DEET website.
• Most proctored exams have been eliminated although a few departments still require them. Check the exams for
  o Location
    ▪ At Proctored Exams in course menu
    ▪ Non-Proctored Exams should be at a Non-Proctored Exams link in the course menu or within the appropriate lesson
  o Test information (administration instructions).
    ▪ Proctors don't go back and read the course syllabus; they go by what is on the test. You will need to indicate time restrictions, resources that may or may not be used, etc. In general, proctored exams may not last more than two hours and may not use open books.
    ▪ Ensure that everything, content covered, number and type of questions, and points agrees with the course syllabus.
  o Test availability
    ▪ Force completion
    ▪ Set timer (No more than two hours)
    ▪ Display period (Must provide testing window of several days)
    ▪ Password
      o enter the departmental password for your course start date for all proctored exams.
        ▪ Log into the Distance Education Password Retrieval Systems at http://soarapp.ctcd.org/testing/index.cfm and click on Get Department Exam Passwords to find the correct password for the start date.
        ▪ Do not post these passwords for students to see or supply them to students.
        ▪ The passwords and other relevant test administration instructions are provided to approved test proctors by the Central Texas College Testing Office.
        ▪ Contact de.techsupport@ctcd.edu if you have questions.
      o DO NOT use the departmental password for non-proctored exams. If you want to use a password, you will need to make one up and ensure that it is distributed to your students at the proper time.
  o Test feedback (choose what you want the students to see)
    ▪ Score
    ▪ Submitted answers
    ▪ Correct answers
    ▪ Feedback
  o Test presentation (one question or all)
• Ensure that your online course is comparable to corresponding face-to-face courses and is engaging. If you have ideas but don’t know how to implement them, contact course.support@ctcd.edu.
• Ensure that you are complying with any departmental standards regarding number and/or nature of exams, written assignments, etc.
• Prepare welcome announcement/email.
  o Send students a brief email that explains how to get into Blackboard. Once they are in Blackboard, you may switch to announcements and messages.
  o Monitor student Blackboard activity and communicate with students who have not logged in or completed required assignments the first week.
  o Suggest that students view the two part Student Orientation recording created by Professor Deets. These recordings are available at the DEET website.

5.2 During the Course

• Sign and return employment paperwork, such as PTEAs, as requested.
• Send a welcome email to your students on or before the first day of class to optimize their ability to find and log into your class. Remember, some students may not know anything about Blackboard. Suggested content for this email is available upon request from course.support@ctcd.edu.
• Make your presence known right away. These are NOT correspondence courses and the students should NOT feel like they are alone.
  o Offer a course orientation using Blackboard Collaborate and schedule periodic “live” lectures.
  o Advise students of resources
    ▪ CTC website at http://www.ctcd.edu
    ▪ DEET website at http://online.ctcd.edu
    ▪ online Student Center in Blackboard
    ▪ online writing and math tutoring in Blackboard
    ▪ 24/7/365 technical support at de.techsupport@ctcd.edu or 1-866-350-4729.
    ▪ Professor Deets at prof.deets@ctcd.edu
• Maintain a presence in your class. Enter courses a minimum of three non-consecutive days per week (or as specified by your department) to monitor student progress, provide timely responses and feedback, and identify and address any student or administrative issues.
  o Post frequent announcements.
  o Send weekly messages or emails.
  o Respond to student emails and other communications within 48 hours. After the welcome email, consider initiating and maintaining contact with students through the Blackboard Message System. Do not delete messages as they are part of the course history and can be useful in resolving student complaints.
Evaluate graded assignments and exams, and provide meaningful feedback to students within seven calendar days following the due date for the assignment or, in the case of self-paced courses or when extensions have been granted, within seven calendar days after submission by the student. If you require that graded assignments be submitted at less than a two-week interval, evaluation and feedback must occur not later than the mid-point between the two assignments to permit students to learn from the previous assignment and make corrections.

- Encourage interaction and collaboration.
  - Discussion board
  - Wikis
  - Group projects
  - Blackboard Collaborate and other tools for regular interactive sessions (and to address accrediting and regulatory agency contact hour concerns).

- Monitor student participation in class.
  - Set up assignments that students submit throughout the course so that you can monitor their activities.
  - Keep grade center current.
  - Consider using the adaptive release function to make items available only at certain times or under specified conditions. This can help you to provide accommodations, such as extra testing time, for students with documented learning disabilities.
  - Use the Blackboard tools
    - Last Access in grade center
    - Course Reports and Performance Dashboard under Evaluation at Course Management.
    - Send reminders to students.

- Use your CTC email for all CTC business, to include communication with students. You may provide an alternate email for emergency situations.
- Return certified rolls within five days from the date they were sent. If you do not receive cert rolls documents (paper or digital) within two weeks after the start date of your course, email dlrocert@ctcd.edu to request a resend of the documents.
- Maintain a frequently updated replica of the Grade Center records between the start and end dates of all courses in case a backup is required. This may be either a hard copy or digital copy on your computer’s hard drive.
- Provide correct and complete student success (retention) input as requested.
- Respond to CTC’s administrative emails within 48 hours (two work days) unless otherwise specified. Saturdays, Sundays, and CTC approved holidays are not included in this time period.
- Respond to CTC’s administrative telephone calls within 24 hours (one work day) unless otherwise specified.
- Respond to GoArmyEd cases within 24 hours (one work day). This is a contractual requirement.
• In case of emergency or major curriculum or testing change, post announcements in classes, email students, and contact (email or phone) supervisor immediately, if appropriate.
• Know withdrawal and other student services policies.
  o Students who registered using the GoArmyEd portal must withdraw using that same portal.
  o Military students who cannot successfully complete the course due to military obligations may be eligible for a military withdrawal.
  o The last date of attendance has been defined not by being logged onto an online class or course management system, but rather by last participation in an online discussion or contact with a faculty member. Read more: http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/11/04/education-department-enforced-distance-education-rule-it-was-published#ixzz1f85JASTf

5.3 Ending the Course

• Remind students to submit the course evaluation.
  o A link is provided in the course menu.
  o Students may also go to http://soarapp.ctcd.org/online_forms/course_evaluation/course_eval_form.cfm
  o Students may use their browser print function to print documentation that they submitted an evaluation for your class.
• Address any IP requests.
  o Check against IP requirements on Page 1 of the Course Syllabus.
  o Allow only sufficient time to complete the one or two major assignments that may be outstanding. (We do not recommend IPs exceeding one to two weeks.)
  o Specify IP conditions and monitor student progress.
  o Place IP deadline in column in Bb grade center.
  o Change IP to course grade as soon as requirements are met or IP deadline has expired.
• Compute and submit course grades.
  o List letter grade in Bb grade center. Be sure column is set to text.
  o Enter letter grade in WebAdvisor at https://webadvisor.ctcd.org/ within the five-day deadline.
  o Download and submit initial Bb grade book. See the DEET website for instructions.
  o Download and submit final Bb grade book when IPs have been resolved.
• Reflect on course to identify areas of improvement for next time.
  o Recall student questions and confusion.
  o View course evaluations and analyze data. See the View My Evaluations link on the Faculty and Staff tab of the Distance Education website.
5.4 Miscellaneous

- Complete all administrative required paperwork according to instructions.
- Complete any required training and notify your supervisor of completion.
- Maintain records for a minimum of one and one-half (1 ½) years in case of student disputes.
  - Blackboard Grade Book/Center.
  - WebAdvisor Gradebook.
  - Certified/Census Rolls.
  - Change of Grade Forms submitted.
  - Correspondence about and copy of contract/plan for satisfying extensions.
- Provide your supervisor with current contact information, to include a phone number and alternate email address. Update your personal contact information immediately, if changes occur, with the designated staff member, and copy your supervisor.
- Continue to check your CTC email account weekly even when not actively teaching. You are responsible for all information disseminated by the College during any leave of absence.
- Continuously check Blackboard for training opportunities, active courses, and courses scheduled for future terms.
- Maintain adequate competency in technical ability and technological advancement to perform job duties and requirements.
  - Periodic training and updates will be offered. We recommend that you take advantage of these opportunities, some of which may count as professional development.
  - After several months of absence from teaching, you may be required to update your skills and knowledge.
    - The period of the absence and type of skills requiring updating will be determined by your supervisor.
    - If you have not taught for six months, a termination may be done, and access to CTC email and other accounts may be ended.

5.5 Disciplinary Action
Habitual or blatant violation of any of the above mentioned guidelines may result in appropriate disciplinary action as prescribed in CTC policies and procedures.

6. Resources and References

6.1 CTC and DEET Websites

Become familiar with the CTC (http://www.ctcd.edu) and the DEET (http://online.ctcd.edu) websites. Explore both the faculty and student resources. This will allow you to answer student questions or refer them to an appropriate area as well as ensuring that you are complying with faculty requirements.
6.2 Supervisors

You have an immediate supervisor or “go to” person for any questions or concerns as you teach your class. A current list is provided at the Faculty Resources Quick Link at the DEET website. If you have a grievance or concerns that cannot be satisfied with your immediate supervisor(s), refer to the organization charts at the CTC website for the proper “chain of command.”

6.3 Blackboard

Refer to the Faculty Resources at the DEET website at http://online.ctcd.edu for on-demand content on Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate, SafeAssign, and other tools. Training in using Blackboard is available online upon request.

6.4 Military Acronyms

CTC’s students and instructors are worldwide, and the majority of the students are affiliated with the military in some manner. If you haven’t been exposed to military personnel, you might not understand some of the jargon, such as PCS, TDY, MOS, etc. Fortunately, there are several websites that can help you with these acronyms:


6.5 Time Zones and the 24-Hour Clock

Because you may interact with students in various locations, you might want to become familiar with time zones and the 24-hour clock to ensure that deadlines and meeting times are clear to all parties. Be sure to indicate a time zone, such as Central Standard Time (CST) for assignment deadlines and Blackboard Collaborate sessions.

Here are a couple of sites to get you started, or you can search for others.

6.5.1 Time zones

- http://www.timezoneconverter.com/

6.5.2 24-hour clocks

- Times from midnight to 9:59 are written in this format:
  - Midnight = 0000 hours
  - 1:00 a.m. = 0100 hours
  - 2:00 a.m. = 0200 hours
3:30 a.m. = 0330 hours
- Times from 10:00 a.m. to 12:59 p.m. are written in this format:
  - 10:00 a.m. = 1000 hours
  - Noon = 1200 hours
- Times from 1:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. are written in this format (basically, add 12:00):
  - 1:00 p.m. = (1:00 + 12:00) or 1300 hours
  - 11:59 p.m. = (11:59 + 12:00) or 2359 hours

If this is too complicated, let an online conversion site do the math.

- [http://www.onlineconversion.com/date_12-24_hour.htm](http://www.onlineconversion.com/date_12-24_hour.htm)
- [http://usmilitary.about.com/od/theorderlyroom/a/militarytime.htm](http://usmilitary.about.com/od/theorderlyroom/a/militarytime.htm)

### 6.6 Accreditation and Regulation

CTC is regionally accredited by SACSCOC and governed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

#### 6.6.1 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools—Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission on Colleges that award associate, baccalaureate, master’s, or doctoral degrees. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is to assure the educational quality and improve the effectiveness of its member institutions.

Central Texas College is accredited by SACS. This link presents Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs: [http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/commadap.pdf](http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/commadap.pdf)

#### 6.6.2 The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's mission is to work closely with policymakers and education stakeholders to develop and implement a higher education framework focused on initiatives to:

- Dramatically increase the number of postsecondary completions;
- Keep college affordable and accessible for all Texans; and
- Align higher education outcomes with current and future workforce needs.
THECB offers best practices and other recommendations for distance education (if this link doesn’t work, go to the THECB homepage and search for distance education):  http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=A5A152AC-D29D-334F-872625E9E77B3B37