Holmes Community College

e-Learning

POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

August 2009

Table of Contents

PROGRAM PLANNING

Mission of E-Learning

The mission of the e-Learning Program at Holmes Community College is to provide quality instruction through electronic technologies to enable students to attain their educational goals. Our strategic initiative is to acquire and support appropriate emerging technologies for curricular, instructional and administrative enhancement. The program will extend the offerings of Holmes Community College to the community and beyond through e-Learning.

Goals of e-Learning

1. To identify, provide, expand, and coordinate the development of quality courses and programs to meet the needs of e-Learners.
2. To develop or modify procedures for providing support services to e-Learners in areas such as testing, admissions, registration, counseling, library services, financial aid, and advising using such means as email, telephone, web pages, and mail.
3. To support and encourage the internal development of the e-Learning program by promoting and providing guidelines for training, inclusion of e-Learning courses in instructor workloads, and technical support.
4. To provide strategies for effective delivery of e-Learning alternatives through the development of policies for consistency in e-Learning.
5. To evaluate periodically and comprehensively every facet of the e-Learning program and to use these results to restructure and improve the program.

Holmes Community College Mission Statement

Holmes, a comprehensive public community college strategically located in Central Mississippi, provides innovative educational and cultural opportunities to its constituents through campus-based and e-Learning programs. In an ever-changing world, the college seeks to prepare its graduates for university transfer, productive employment, and lifelong learning by offering an Associate in Arts degree, Associate in Applied Science degree, and Vocational certificates. Holmes Community College, whose primary commitment is to excellence in all areas, offers affordable, equal access to higher education in an attractive, secure, multi-campus environment.

Holmes Community College Strategic Initiatives

I. Maintain an environment for continuous accessibility and improvement of the quality of education.
II. Continue to acquire and support appropriate emerging technologies for curricular, instructional, and administrative processes.
III. Improve college personnel/student interactions to achieve a higher rate of student success.
IV. Expand and improve the college's infrastructure in support of student services, instructional programs, administrative processes, and community services.
V. Improve the college's image by enhancing public relations through communication.
VI. Expand and improve educational partnerships with business/industry and appropriate agencies.

Policies and Procedures

I.   EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

A. Quality of Courses
E-Learning courses are comparable to traditional campus-based courses in terms of: (1) syllabi, (2) textbooks, (3) grading, (4) methods of evaluation, and (5) learning outcomes.

B.   MSVCC Core Content File
Content for each Holmes Community College e-Learning course is supplied to the MSVCC Core Content File for the purpose of verifying content among MSVCC courses as well as against the HCC traditional on-campus courses.

C. Course Review
A course review will be conducted for each first-time instructor and each new course. Criteria will include, but not be limited to, student satisfaction, student learning outcomes, and student retention.

D.   Course Development Process
An open invitation is extended to all faculties for the development of e-Learning courses; however, college staffing and curriculum priorities will require evaluation on a course-by-course basis. Faculty wishing to develop or conduct courses must submit a request to the Director of e-Learning and to the Vice-President of Academic Programs. All aspects of course development must be complete prior to submission to the MSVCC master schedule.

E. Ownership of Material/Copyright
Holmes Community College reserves the right of ownership of all electronic documents, programs, curricular, etc… developed under the auspices of the college.

F. Advertisement of MSVCC Courses
All courses of the MSVCC are presented/advertised each semester to students registering through Holmes Community College.

G.   Interaction with Students
Communication between students and faculty is vital for the success of e-Learning. Holmes has adopted the following Student Structured Access Policy:

> Holmes Community College full-time and part-time faculty must provide structured access to its online students. Access methods must be clearly stated within the posted faculty information in the Blackboard or Desire 2 Learn course site and also within the course syllabus. Access in the form of stated "office hours" may consist of, but not be limited to, structure email response policies, designated live chat sessions and/or discussion board postings, scheduled phone accessibility, or combinations of such methods.

H. Accessibility (ADA)
ADA compliance for online courses will be applied via a prudent method of providing alternative content, which meets the needs of a specifically challenged learner.

I.   Blackboard
The SBCJC has a contract with "Blackboard" (BB) to provide both a platform for a class via a website and the server itself that houses that website. The URL for the blackboard site is http://msvcc.blackboard.com.

J. Desire 2 Learn
The SBCJC has a contract with "Desire 2 Learn" (D2L) to provide both a platform for a class via a website and the server itself that houses the website. The URL for the Desire 2 Learn site is http://msvcc.desire2learn.com.

K. Proctored Testing
All Holmes Community College provided courses must administer at least one proctored test during the semester. If an instructor wishes not to administer a proctored exam, he/she must receive approval from the Vice-President of Academic Programs. At each campus, Holmes provides proctored testing. These tests are given in a secure environment. Contact with the test proctor must be made to schedule an appointment for testing via the website http://www.holmescc.edu/hccapp/proctor.

II.   SUPPORT SERVICES

A. Admissions
E-Learning students are held to the same admission standards as traditional students and must follow the same process for enrollment at Holmes Community College. Students may apply for admission, register for classes, and pay tuition fees without coming to campus. Students may complete and submit the admissions application online at http://www.holmescc.edu/FutureStudents/Admissions_steps.aspx. Upon admission to Holmes Community College, the student will receive a "My Doghouse" login and password.

B. Registration
Students who wish to register for e-Learning courses should (1) consult with an advisor and (2) complete the registration process at "My Doghouse" using the login and password received after being admitted to Holmes Community College. "My Doghouse" can be located at the following website: https://my.holmescc.edu/cp/home/displaylogin. After logging into "My Doghouse," click on the "My eLearning" tab, and complete the Registration Form.

C. Advising
In order to best serve our online students, an advisor will be assigned at the time of registration. If a student is already in the enrollment system, an assessment will be made to insure that he/she has the appropriate advisor. If a student is registering for the first time, every attempt will be made to assign the student an advisor that is located on his/her designated campus and that is knowledgeable in that student's major field.

The advisor's name will be printed on the student's Holmes Community College detailed Course Schedule. The student may contact their specific advisor by linking to the directory at the Holmes website http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/Directory.aspx where telephone numbers are posted.

The student may also contact an Academic Counselor. Their contact information can also be found at the counseling page of the Holmes website http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/student_services_counseling.aspx.

Graduation requirements for all degrees, diplomas, and certificates can be found by accessing the college catalog at http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/catalog.aspx.

D. Financial Aid
Access to all financial aid opportunities, scholarships, aid information, and qualifications are available online at http://www.holmescc.edu/FinancialAid/index.aspx. Then click on any of the links to the left side of the webpage or use the following address: http://www.e-fao.com/efao_site.html?OEID=002408&ViewID={C9336A8E-0E7A-44E8-AF64-0D10B727D4B8}.

E. Student Records
Students may access the degree evaluation form and the transcript request form on the Holmes Community College website. Personal information may also be changed through "My Doghouse" of the Holmes website.

Degree evaluation forms can be found by logging into "My Doghouse," clicking on the "My Resources" tab, and then clicking on the degree evaluation link to the left of the page.

Transcript request forms can be found and submitted at. http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/Admissions_SendTranscript.aspx. Students may also choose to print out a hard copy of the form and mail it to the Admissions Office at Holmes.

To change contact information such as your address, phone number, and email address, login to "My Doghouse" and click on the "My Holmes" tab. Click on the "Student Services in SSB" link under the "Academic and Account Services" box on the right side of the page. Then click on the "Personal Information" tab and update your contact information. To change your name and any other information, contact the Admissions and Records Office at Holmes.

F. Student Disability Services
The Office of Disability Support Services is the official contact for students with disabilities. This office serves as an advocate for students with disabilities and assists them in achieving equal access to all college programs and services and is available through the Holmes Community College website http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/student_services_health.aspx.

G. Student Activities
It is the mission of the student activities and student government to serve as mediators between the faculty and the student body and to assist in all student activities. The department also provides support services to on-line students. The student activities web page is http://www.holmescc.edu/FutureStudents/campuslife_activities.aspx. Information pertaining to clubs/organizations can be found at http://www.holmescc.edu/FutureStudents/CampusLife_Clubs.aspx, and information

pertaining to intramurals can be found at
http://www.holmescc.edu/FutureStudents/CampusLife_Intramurals.aspx.

H. Career Center
Online information pertaining to career development and placement can be found at
http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/students_general_careercenter.aspx.

I. Student Complaint/Grievance Procedure
Holmes Community College has an administrative procedure in place which is designed to
receive, investigate, and resolve student complaints, whether academic or non-academic.
Any student who wishes to make a formal complaint regarding a college program, a service
of the college, an employee of the college, or any other individual or aspect of the college,
must take the following steps:

1. Discuss the problem with the faculty member, staff member, or administrator
involved. Direct communication between the two parties usually resolves most of the
problems.

2. If informal efforts to resolve the problem are not productive, the complainant should
then contact the appropriate counselor (Academic/Vocational), supervisor, administrator,
or Director of e-Learning to help in processing the complaint if this becomes the only
avenue to resolve the problem.

3. If the complainant, at this point, wishes to file a formal complaint, he or she should
express the nature of the complaint and all pertinent information in writing to the
appropriate person. The appropriate person would be that individual in charge of the
person or program in question. The college representative receiving the complaint will
either handle the complaint personally or will refer it to the appropriate person for
disposition. A response will be made to the complainant within 10 working days.

4. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of the grievance, that student may
then appeal to the President in writing through the Academic Dean on academic matters
or through the Dean of Students on disciplinary matters. The appeal to the President
must be made within three (3) days of the previous decision. The President's decision
will be final.

5. Students who do not submit a written appeal by the appointed date forfeit any further
consideration in this matter.

6. No adverse action will be taken against a student for filing a complaint.

7. All students will be suspended from all activities during the appeals process.

J. Attendance/Absence
Holmes Community College is a member of the Mississippi Virtual Community College
(MSVCC). This allows students to take online courses that are taught by Holmes instructors
(provided courses), as well as courses that are taught by instructors from the other
community colleges (hosted courses). Each college will have its own absence policy. At
the beginning of the course, the instructor must communicate with the student by making

documented class policies and his/her expectations regarding the format and frequency of class participation available to him/her.

Absence policy for online courses provided by Holmes instructors:

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

A student participating in a provided online course will be allowed two (2) absences. Attendance will be monitored by timely submission of assignments, including tests, homework, projects, etc. A student is expected to complete all assignments by the appropriate due date. Upon the third absence, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course barring any extenuating circumstance.

It is understandable that extenuating circumstances occur, such as an extreme illness, death in the family, legal matters, or military duty.* It is the student's responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to substantiate such circumstances at which time the instructor will determine if an extension is warranted. Students and instructors of online courses will adhere to the academic calendar and the process of appeal.

* Circumstances that are NOT considered extenuating:
   -Registering late for the class
   -Failure to read the syllabus
   -Failure to plan appropriately
   -Not having the appropriate textbook or software
   -Technical problems

K. Withdrawal Process
A student who finds it necessary to withdraw (drop) from a course will be allowed to withdraw (drop) with a W through 75% of the semester. After the 75% mark, students will NOT be allowed to initiate a withdrawal (drop). Students who stop attending after the 75% mark will be cut-out by the instructor and will receive an F. Students who are administratively withdrawn due to extreme hardship after the 75% mark must be passing the course to receive a W. Otherwise, students will receive an F for the course.

Procedure for withdrawing from an online course:

1) Withdrawing **<u>DURING</u>** the Drop/Add Period:
   The student must complete the Drop Form located within "My Doghouse" at https://my.holmescc.edu/cp/home/displaylogin. After logging into "My Doghouse," click on the "My eLearning" tab, and complete and submit the form entitled "Drop a Class."

2) Withdrawing **<u>AFTER</u>** the Drop/Add Period:
   All Holmes students must contact their instructor and have the instructor submit the following information to the e-Learning Office:
      - Student Name

    - Student Social
    - Course Name, Prefix, Number, & Section
    - LDA

L. Honesty Policy

A hallmark of any profession is integrity and honesty. Academic honesty is expected of all students; therefore, each student is expected to accomplish his/her own work. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, deceptive acts such as the following:

 a. plagiarizing from any source
 b. cheating in any manner on tests, papers, reports, etc.
 c. turning in work as their own when, in fact, it was not their work
 d. improperly using technology
 e. stealing, buying, or selling course materials
 f. either impersonating another student during a test or having another person assume ones identity during a test
 g. deliberately conveying false or misleading information

When academic misconduct has occurred, the instructor has the responsibility of assigning an appropriate penalty in accordance with the instructor's institutional policy. (See the college Bulletin) http://www.holmescc.edu/GeneralInfo/catalog.aspx. This may include failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or dismissal from the institution.

M. Library/Learning Resources

The college ensures that students participating in e-Learning programs have access to adequate and appropriate learning resources. Learning resources are provided through a variety of methods including the college's participation in statewide online learning resource cooperatives including MAGNOLIA, and MELO. These resources can be accessed by logging into "My Doghouse" and clicking on the "My Library" tab. In addition, the holdings of the college's three libraries can be accessed through the online library catalog at http://library.holmescc.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi.exe/x/0/0/49.

N. Bookstore

Bookstore information is provided on the e-Learning website http://www.holmescc.edu/DistanceLearning/DistanceLearning_Textbooks.aspx. The Holmes Community College Bookstore provides textbook for those courses that are taught by Holmes instructors. The student may secure the textbook for a class taught by another college from the Holmes Bookstore through a "special order" or purchase books online at www.follett.com or www.amazon.com.

III. Faculty

A. Adjunct Faculty

In the event that Holmes Community College students participate in a hosted course, course instructors will be considered adjunct employees of Holmes Community College. In such

cases, the provider institution will fulfill the full-time faculty requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

B. Training and Support Services for Faculty
The college provides professional development opportunities and support services specifically related to teaching via electronic delivery.

C. Faculty Load
E-Learning courses are considered a part of the regular teaching load and may contribute to an instructor's overload, requiring additional compensation.

D. Credentials/Repository
In all academic areas, the master's degree with eighteen (18) graduate semester hours of specialization in the teaching field is considered the minimum requirement. In specialized, professional, career, or technical fields, evidence of professional competency is acceptable in lieu of formal academic preparation.

Adjunct e-Learning faculty members are held to the same standards as full-time Holmes Community College faculty members.

Holmes Community College must supply e-Learning faculty credentials information to the MSVCC central repository for restricted viewing by the appropriate host college.

IV. Planning and Evaluation

A. Institutional Planning
Holmes Community College's planning, budgeting, and policy development processes reflect facilities, staffing, and equipment and other resources essential to the viability of the e-Learning program.

B. Education Effectiveness
The office of Planning and Research provides reports of educational effectiveness of e-Learning programs to ensure comparability to campus-based programs.

C. Evaluation of Online Courses
Holmes Community College uses two forms of evaluations for its online courses: student evaluations and supervisor evaluations. These evaluations are administered in alternate years. Student evaluations are administered in odd years and supervisor evaluations are administered in even years.

> STUDENT EVALUATIONS:
> Evaluation by students is emphasized because they are the only ones who routinely experience all facets of an instructor's contribution to the learning process. The major purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback for the improvement of instruction. A secondary purpose may be, in some situations, the provision of information to be used as one factor in making personnel decisions.

The following guidelines are to be observed regarding student evaluations of instruction:
1. The evaluation will be administered by the MSVCC.
2. Confidentiality of student responses is to be insured.
3. The instructor is to be given a composite of the results after the end of the grading period.

Provided Courses:
1. The administration is to provide a post-evaluation conference with the instructor to select items for improvement and to provide any assistance/service needed for improvement of instruction.
2. All instructors will complete a follow-up form showing activities to be implemented for improvement of instruction.

Hosted Courses:
1. Student evaluation results will be reviewed by the HCC administration.
2. Upon completion of this review, courses will be either approved or disapproved.
3. If a course is disapproved the providing institution will be notified of this status and the reason(s) why.

SUPERVISOR EVALUATIONS:
The purpose of supervisor evaluations is to improve instruction. This evaluation will focus on the appropriateness of learning objectives, the validation of desired learning outcomes, the appropriateness of class policies, and faculty credentials.

The following guidelines will be observed regarding supervisor evaluations of instruction:
Provided Courses:
1. Provided courses will be evaluated by the Director of e-Learning, the Academic Dean, and/or a Vo-Tech Director using the e-Learning course evaluation form.
2. The items to be evaluated will include the nine course information items found at the MSVCC Enrollment Tool and the Blackboard course itself.
3. Recommendations for improvement will be made by the supervisors.
4. The administration is to provide a post-evaluation conference with the instructor to select items for improvement and to provide any assistance/service needed for improvement of instruction.
5. Instructors will complete a follow-up to address these recommendations.

Hosted Courses:
1. Hosted courses will be evaluated by an assigned department evaluator familiar with the content of each course using the e-Learning course evaluation form.
2. The material to be evaluated will be the nine course items found at the MSVCC Enrollment Tool.
3. The evaluator will make a recommendation to approve or disapprove the course.

4. If a course is "disapproved" during this process, it will not be made available to students until it has been reevaluated in a later term and attained "approved" status.
5. If a course is "disapproved," the providing institution will be notified of this status and the reason(s) why.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, a letter from the Academic Dean will be issued to each chief academic officer of the MSVCC membership stating:

I have reviewed the evaluations of courses and instructors both as a host and as a provider of all instructors used by my institution as a member of the MSVCC for _____ term. I further certify that the instructors have adequate academic preparation for courses offered, course content criteria as stated in The Uniform Course Numbering System in Mississippi Public Community and Junior Colleges, and have reviewed all appropriate instructor evaluations.

D. Assessment of Student Capability
Holmes Community College assesses student capability to succeed in E-Learning programs through a web-based self-assessment and uses the information in advisement of students.

E. Student Evaluations of Faculty and Services
The college utilizes MSVCC student data to determine effectiveness in the areas of quality of online instruction and support services.

V. Administration, Facilities/Equipment, and Finance

A. Personnel
The college has designated qualified personnel for the purpose of administration of e-Learning at Holmes Community College.

B. Quality of e-Learning
The Vice-President of Academic Programs is responsible for the quality of e-Learning at Holmes Community College.

C. Marketing/Recruitment
Adequate and accurate advertising, recruiting, and registration information pertaining to (1) curriculum, (2) course requirements, (3) degree requirements, (4) support services, (5) pre-requisite technology skills, (6) costs/payment, and (7) financial aid resources information is provided on a timely basis.

D. Facilities/Equipment
The college provides laboratories, facilities, and equipment necessary to meet program/course requirements and train/support current and potential e-Learning faculty members.

E. Funding:
Designated funds for the operation of e-Learning programs are administered through the general educational program budget.