



# **eLearning Support & Services**

## **Policies, Procedures, and Standards**

DRAFT 5 (February 12, 2009)

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## **OVERVIEW**

The Amarillo College Strategic Plan-Through 2010 describes a major institutional goal as "Deliver instruction and services using technology to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and convenience for students, faculty, and staff" (p.9). eLearning exists as a department of The Center for Teaching and Learning. eLearning is responsible for providing technology and administrative support for distance education and traditional courses.

*(First line of approval for this document will be Academic Technology Committee. Then it goes to the IT Council who recommends it for final approval by the President's Cabinet.)*

Section 1	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 1.1 – 1.7	<b>Academic eLearning Support &amp; Services</b>	LMS Policy Team and eLearning	-Author

## 1.0 eLEARNING SUPPORT & SERVICES

### 1.1. Introduction

The role of eLearning is evolving as the college infrastructure is being redefined. In January 2008, eLearning joined with faculty in an extensive search for a new learning management system to replace WebCT. After selecting Angel as the new LMS, the search team shifted its focus to the successful implementation of the new system.

### 1.2. Purpose

To facilitate a smooth transition from WebCT to Angel LMS, it is necessary to redefine procedures and implement policy changes related to the support and services provided by eLearning.

### 1.3. Audience

eLearning Support Policy applies to faculty and staff who use technology to develop or deliver instruction for online, hybrid, enhanced online, or traditional courses.

### 1.4. Definitions

1.4.1. Instructional design support - eLearning assistance with needs analysis, structure, design, presentation, and flow of course content, communication, and evaluation methods for online courses.

1.4.2. LMS - Learning Management System used to develop, deliver, and manage online classes.

- 1.4.3. LMS Policy Team – LMS Team was created in January 2008, to select and implement a new Learning Management System for Amarillo College. The LMS Policy Team is a sub-team of the LMS Team, created July 2008, to redefine procedures and implement policy changes related to eLearning support.
- 1.4.4. Traditional Course – Instruction delivered 100% face-to-face contact with the instructor. A disclaimer will be added to all traditional course offering information to alert students they are expected to use computers with internet capability to enhance their learning. (May be lecture, laboratory, lecture/laboratory, clinical, practicum, internship, cooperative experience.)
- 1.4.5. Online Course – Instruction delivered 100% over the Internet. (Note: Does not require a student to come to an Amarillo College campus for any portion of the course.)
- 1.4.6. Hybrid Course – Instruction delivered 50% online and 50% conducted through face-to-face contact. (Note: Seat time will be reduced by 50% when scheduling classrooms.)
- 1.4.7. Enhanced Online Course – An online course that requires a student attend face-to-face instruction that does not meet the hybrid course definition. (Note: Any course that has more than 50% and less than 100% in an online component.)
- 1.4.8. Faculty Course Shell – An Angel shell that contains no students, to be used by one instructor to develop and maintain a course from semester to semester, from which content can be copied to classes for a live term.
- 1.4.9. Master Course Shell – An Angel shell that contains no students, which can be shared by more than one instructor teaching the same course, to be developed and maintained from semester to semester, from which content can be copied to classes for a live term.
- 1.5. Support Policy Statements
  - 1.5.1. Full instructional design support for new courses being developed in WebCT is no longer available from eLearning, effective 09-12-08.
  - 1.5.2. Instructors may develop new WebCT courses independently; however, all courses taught after Spring 2009 must be converted to the Angel LMS.

- 1.5.3. Instructors who need help with instructional design, online course development, graphics, or multimedia support should contact eLearning to schedule an appointment.
- 1.5.4. Course content will not be created or added by eLearning unless the instructor is actively participating to become proficient in course development processes.
- 1.5.5. When requesting eLearning instructional design support for new course development, a minimum of 60 days lead time is required, before the course is scheduled to go online.
- 1.5.6. Instructors are responsible for obtaining copyright permissions for materials to be duplicated or placed into online course content.
- 1.5.7. Instructors are required to furnish documented evidence of copyright permission before requesting eLearning to duplicate, transfer, stream, or imbed images, videos, or textbook materials.
- 1.5.8. eLearning will manually create and issue Faculty Course shells and Master Course shells on request, after approval and training requirements are met.
- 1.5.9. Division or Department Chair must determine who can request Master Course shells, and how many Master Course shells are needed.
- 1.6. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures
  - 1.6.1. Requirements and procedures to request Faculty Course shells include:
    - 1.6.1.1. Each faculty member will register for training online through the Center for Teaching and Learning Web Advisor instant-enrollment link (<http://www.actx.edu/pod/index.php?module=article&id=553>).
    - 1.6.1.2. Each faculty member will complete the required one-time training within a 30-day period. This training includes two, 2-hour, face-to-face workshop sessions (*Online Basics I* and *Online Basics II*), and 12 online modules (*Online Fundamentals – Angel 7.3*).
    - 1.6.1.3. A faculty training coordinator will report to the Center for Teaching and Learning when each faculty member successfully completes the training requirement.
    - 1.6.1.4. Each faculty member will complete and print the online form, *Instructor Request for AC Online Faculty Course Shells*. This form should identify all

proposed courses, be approved and signed by the Department Chair, and submitted to the Center for Teaching and Learning.

([http://www.actx.edu/elearning/files/filecabinet/folder5/Instructor\\_Request\\_for\\_AC\\_Online\\_Faculty\\_Course\\_Shells.pdf](http://www.actx.edu/elearning/files/filecabinet/folder5/Instructor_Request_for_AC_Online_Faculty_Course_Shells.pdf)).

1.6.1.5. The Center for Teaching and Learning will review and verify the accuracy of the information submitted and document the completion of required training before forwarding the validated request to eLearning.

1.6.1.6. eLearning will create a new Faculty Course shell for each course identified on the validated request.

1.6.2. Requirements and procedures to request Master Course shells include:

1.6.2.1. The Division and/or Department Chair(s) will identify the structure for creating, maintaining, and using Master Course shells, if needed.

1.6.2.2. The Division and/or Department Chair(s) will assign a faculty manager for the Master Course(s). The faculty manager is responsible for maintaining and updating Master Course(s) as required.

1.6.2.3. The faculty manager will complete and print the online form, *Division and/or Department Request for Master Course Shells*. *(Create form and put link here, after process is defined.)* This form must identify all proposed Master Courses. The form should be approved and signed by the Division and/or Department Chair(s), and submitted to eLearning.

1.6.2.4. eLearning will create a Master Course shell for each course identified on the validated request.

## 1.7. Other Information

1.7.1. Copyright information can be accessed through a link on the AC Library homepage (<http://www.actx.edu/library/index.php?module=article&id=9>).

Section 2	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 2.0 – 2.x	<b>Academic eLearning Training</b>	LMS Policy Team and eLearning	-Author

## 2.0 TRAINING

### 2.1. Introduction

As we transition from WebCT to the Angel LMS, it is necessary for faculty to complete training before migrating content from existing WebCT courses, developing new online or hybrid courses, and successfully managing their classes in the Angel learning environment.

### 2.2. Purpose

The purpose of this Training Policy is to ensure that online faculty are provided with the skills and knowledge required to develop, deliver, and manage their classes using the Angel LMS.

### 2.3. Audience

Training Policy applies to all faculty members who teach online, hybrid, enhanced online courses, or traditional courses.

### 2.4. Definitions

- 2.4.1. Traditional Course – Instruction delivered 100% face-to-face contact with the instructor. A disclaimer will be added to all traditional course offering information to alert students they are expected to use computers with internet capability to enhance their learning. (May be lecture, laboratory, lecture/laboratory, clinical, practicum, internship, cooperative experience.)
- 2.4.2. Online Course – Instruction delivered 100% over the Internet. (Note: Does not require a student to come to an Amarillo College campus for any portion of the course.)

2.4.3. Hybrid Course – Instruction delivered 50% online and 50% conducted through face-to-face contact. (Note: Seat time will be reduced by 50% when scheduling classrooms.)

2.4.4. Enhanced Online Course – An online course that requires a student attend face-to-face instruction that does not meet the hybrid course definition. (Note: Any course that has more than 50% and less than 100% in an online component.)

## 2.5. Policy Statements

2.5.1. Instructors are required to successfully complete *Online Basics I, Online Basics II, and Online Fundamentals (Angel 7.3)* training before they can activate their courses in the Angel LMS.

2.5.2. Instructors must demonstrate proficiency in Angel, as determined by a faculty training coordinator.

2.5.3. Division or Department Chairs will not approve or assign an online, hybrid, or enhanced online course for any instructor who has not successfully completed the required training.

## 2.6. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures

2.6.1. The Center for Teaching and Learning will document and track faculty training, using Colleague.

2.6.2. Division and/or Department Chairs may request faculty training records from the Center for Teaching and Learning as needed.

Section 3	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 3.0 – 3.x	<b>Information Technology Support</b>	LMS Policy Team and eLearning	-Author

### 3.0 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

#### 3.1. Introduction

Information Technology Support includes the various services available for eLearning.

#### 3.2. Purpose

The purpose of eLearning Information Technology Support policy is to define, describe and articulate the types of services available for eLearning in terms of responsibilities, roles, and procedures.

#### 3.3. Audience

The eLearning Information Technology Support policy applies to faculty and staff who use or support technology to develop or deliver instruction for online, traditional, hybrid, or enhanced online courses.

#### 3.4. Definitions

- 3.4.1. AskAC is a service provided by Student Services to provide support for student questions related to any aspect of Amarillo College.
- 3.4.2. IT Helpdesk is a service provided by the Information Technology Services (ITS) division to assist AC employees with resolving technology-based issues related to computers, the network, and audio-video equipment.
- 3.4.3. Traditional Course – Instruction delivered 100% face-to-face contact with the instructor. A disclaimer will be added to all traditional course offering information to alert students they are expected to use computers with internet capability to

enhance their learning. (May be lecture, laboratory, lecture/laboratory, clinical, practicum, internship, cooperative experience.)

3.4.4. Online Course – Instruction delivered 100% over the Internet. (Note: Does not require a student to come to an Amarillo College campus for any portion of the course.)

3.4.5. Hybrid Course – Instruction delivered 50% online and 50% conducted through face-to-face contact. (Note: Seat time will be reduced by 50% when scheduling classrooms.)

3.4.6. Enhanced Online Course – An online course that requires a student attend face-to-face instruction that does not meet the hybrid course definition. (Note: Any course that has more than 50% and less than 100% in an online component.)

### 3.5. Policy Statements

3.5.1. Users must follow a specific protocol to request help with problems in live online classes. (See 3.6 Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures)

3.5.2. eLearning will identify and recommend programs and course development software to be adopted and supported.

3.5.3. Programs and course development software to be supported by eLearning must be approved by the Academic Technology Council and by the Information Technology Council.

### 3.6. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures

3.6.1. The protocol for supporting students enrolled in online, hybrid, and enhanced online classes is:

3.6.1.1. Self-service is available through FAQ's (college knowledgebase), myAC, instructor syllabi, help within Angel, and attendance in an online introductory class.

3.6.1.2. Emails will be sent by AskAC with information on how to get started in an online class to all students enrolled in at least one online, hybrid, or enhanced online class the week before classes start and every day through late registration.

3.6.1.3. AskAC is the student support contact for problems concerning Access, features, pop-ups, browsers, and plug-ins.

- 3.6.1.4. If AskAC is unable to solve the problem, a work order will be initiated by the agent taking the call to the ITS Helpdesk.
- 3.6.1.5. If the IT Helpdesk is unable to resolve the problem, the IT Helpdesk will contact the Programming and Network personnel.
- 3.6.1.6. If Programming and Networking cannot resolve the problem, they will contact eLearning first, then Angel Support if necessary.
- 3.6.1.7. AskAC will refer calls to the instructor for problems concerning access codes, test access, and broken links.
- 3.6.1.8. If the instructor is unable to help, the instructor will contact the Center for Teaching and Learning.
- 3.6.2. The protocol for supporting online faculty is:
  - 3.6.2.1. Instructors are encouraged to seek self-help through FAQ's (college knowledgebase), peer help, contextual help within Angel, and online training manuals.
  - 3.6.2.2. The instructor will contact the Center for Teaching and Learning for assistance with all problems.
  - 3.6.2.3. The Center for Teaching and Learning contact person will resolve or route the call to eLearning.

Section 4	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 4.0 – 4.x	<b>Online Course Creation, Set-up &amp; Delivery</b>	LMS Policy Team and eLearning	-Author

## 4.0 ONLINE COURSE CREATION, SET-UP & DELIVERY

### 4.1. Introduction

As we transition to the Angel LMS, effective and efficient use of resources will be essential. Course size will be a significant factor as we move to a hosted server.

### 4.2. Purpose

The purpose of Online Course Creation, Set-up, and Delivery Policy is to facilitate a smooth transition to the Angel LMS, identify responsibilities, and define procedures that will promote efficient use of eLearning resources.

### 4.3. Audience

Online Course Creation, Set-up, and Delivery Policy applies to all faculty who use the Angel LMS.

### 4.4. Definitions

- 4.4.1. Hosted Server – Online courses will be delivered from a server located at a remote Angel hosting facility.
- 4.4.2. Course Shell – A new or blank Angel course which does not yet contain any content.
- 4.4.3. Course Section – A single class or instance of a particular online course.
- 4.4.4. LOR - A Learning Object Repository is a dedicated, online space for course content that can be shared. The content in a LOR can be accessed by linking to it from other courses, which saves server space and simplifies editing of content that is shared among courses.

#### 4.5. Policy Statements

- 4.5.1. Instructors must deliver courses as identified to the Registrar for official scheduling (online, hybrid, enhanced online, traditional).
- 4.5.2. Instructors are responsible for activating their own classes at the beginning of each new semester or term.
- 4.5.3. Instructors are responsible for creating backup files to archive their own courses, and for restoring them to their own new course shells each semester.
- 4.5.4. Division or Department Chair will determine whether a Departmental LOR (Learning Object Repository) is needed.

#### 4.6. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures

- 4.6.1. All credit courses will be pushed to the Angel production server each semester.
- 4.6.2. Course shells will be available to instructors approximately 1 month before each semester start date.
- 4.6.3. The procedure to activate a course is:
  - 4.6.3.1. Click **Management** tab in the course.
  - 4.6.3.2. Locate **Course Settings** section
  - 4.6.3.3. Click **General Course Settings** link.
  - 4.6.3.4. Click **Access** tab, then set **Member Access** to “All Members.”
  - 4.6.3.5. Click **Save** button.
- 4.6.4. Courses will remain accessible to students for 7 days following the end of each term.
  - 4.6.4.1. Instructors may disable their courses sooner if they do not want their courses to be accessible during the 7-day period.
- 4.6.5. The procedure to disable a course is:
  - 4.6.5.1. Click **Management** tab in the course.
  - 4.6.5.2. Locate **Course Settings** section
  - 4.6.5.3. Click **General Course Settings** link.
  - 4.6.5.4. Click **Access** tab, then set **Member Access** to “Editors Only.”
  - 4.6.5.5. Click **Save** button.

- 4.6.6. Courses will remain accessible to instructors for 30 days following the end of each term.
- 4.6.7. Incomplete grades may be assigned by completing the *Amarillo College Contract for Grade of "I" (Incomplete)*. This contract is available from departmental offices.
  - 4.6.7.1. Only courses with incomplete grades will remain accessible for longer than 30 days after the end of each term.
  - 4.6.7.2. Courses with incompletes will remain active for 3 months.
- 4.6.8. Instructors may change a grade within a six-month period after a course ends.
  - 4.6.8.1. Instructors who want to change a grade will complete and print the *Change of Grade Form* (<http://www.actx.edu/forms/>), sign the form, and submit it to the Registrar's office.
  - 4.6.8.2. If an instructor wants to change a grade after the six-month period has lapsed, the *Change of Grade Form* must be signed by the instructor, the Department Chair and the Vice President/Dean of Instruction.
- 4.6.9. Courses will be removed from the Angel server 30 days following the end of each term.
  - 4.6.9.1. If it becomes necessary for an instructor to access a course after it has been removed from the Angel server, the instructor or a system administrator must restore the course section from the archived course backup file.
- 4.6.10. The Angel host will provide 4 DVD archives of all course sections each year at the end of Fall, Spring, Summer I and Summer II semesters.
  - 4.6.10.1. Section archives will be kept on DVD at Amarillo College, not on the hosted Angel server.
- 4.6.11. Instructors will be able to merge their own course rosters 30 days before the start date of each semester until the first day of class.
  - 4.6.11.1. The procedure to merge course rosters for a multiple section course is:
    - 4.6.11.1.1. On the AC Online home page, click **Merged Roster Manager**.
    - 4.6.11.1.2. Select courses to be merged and click **Continue**.
    - 4.6.11.1.3. Input a title for the new merged course.
    - 4.6.11.1.4. Select **Disable Source Courses**.
    - 4.6.11.1.5. Click **Create Course**.

4.6.11.2. If instructors need to have course rosters merged after the first day of class each semester, they must contact the Helpdesk.

4.6.12. PENDING - Procedures for Division or Department Chair to request a Departmental LOR include:

4.6.12.1. The Division or Department Chair will determine whether a Departmental LOR is needed.

4.6.12.2. The Division or Department Chair will specify an instructor in the department to be the editor of the Departmental LOR. The editor is responsible for making all changes to the Departmental LOR.

4.6.12.3. The Division or Department Chair or the Departmental LOR editor will complete and print the online form *Request for a Departmental LOR (Learning Object Repository)*. ( This form will be created and a link provided when the procedure is defined. The form should be approved and signed by the Division or Department Chair, and submitted to (eLearning or Helpdesk?).

4.6.12.4. (eLearning or Helpdesk?) will create a Departmental LOR for the Division or Department.

#### 4.7. Other Information

4.7.1. When merging course rosters to create a multiple section class, the following best practices are recommended:

4.7.1.1. Whenever possible, merge the rosters of empty courses before any content is added.

4.7.1.2. When two or more course rosters are merged into a new course, the content should be loaded into the new merged course.

4.7.1.3. Backup the new merged course before making any modifications to the course.

4.7.1.4. Do not unmerge a course after work has been submitted by students, to avoid losing their work.

Section 5	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 5.0 – 5.x	<b>Course Development</b>	LMS Policy Team and eLearning	-Author

## 5.0 COURSE DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1. Introduction

As online courses are developed or re-designed for the Angel LMS, it is important to utilize available tools and resources, and to employ best practices to effectively engage students and ensure sound instruction.

### 5.2. Purpose

The purpose of Course Development Policy is to identify responsibilities and define procedures to promote best practices and the effective use of Angel LMS and eLearning technology.

### 5.3. Audience

Course Development Policy applies to all online classes developed or taught by AC faculty.

### 5.4. Definitions

5.4.1. LMS- Learning Management System used to develop, deliver, and manage online classes.

5.4.2. LOR - A Learning Object Repository is a dedicated online space for course content that can be shared. The content in a LOR can be accessed by linking to it from other courses, which saves server space and simplifies editing of content that is shared among courses.

- 5.4.3. Stipend – A Stipend may include (a) release time from teaching, (b) monetary award equivalent to three hours overload rate, or (c) other compensation as identified on the Application for Online Course Development.

## 5.5. Policy Statements

### 5.5.1. PENDING – Establish recommended maximum size for online course content.

- 5.5.2. All online courses must provide a link to the CMS Syllabus.

- 5.5.3. Instructors are responsible for obtaining copyright permissions for all content materials used in their courses.

### 5.5.4. Faculty Stipends or Reassigned Time for Online Course Development

- 5.5.4.1. Procedures for faculty to request stipends or reassigned time for developing an online course are as follows:

- 5.5.4.1.1. Complete and secure approval signatures required for the Application for Online Course Development (link)

- 5.5.4.1.1.1. If approved, a confirmation memorandum with requirements for completion will be received from the Vice President/Dean of Instruction.

- 5.5.4.1.1.2. If denied, the form will be returned to the faculty making the request by respective division/department chairs with explanations.

- 5.5.4.1.2. Requirements for stipends approved include the following:

- 5.5.4.1.2.1. Meet with Center for Teaching and Learning instructional technology specialist for guidelines on course development and use of eLearning resources

- 5.5.4.1.2.2. Complete development of the course as approved following the timetable submitted with the application.

- 5.5.4.1.2.3. Follow the Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs as set forth by both the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Commission on Colleges Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

- 5.5.4.1.2.4. Complete the Best Practices of AC Online checklist and submit with required signatures.

5.5.4.1.2.5. When the course is complete, meet with a CTL instructional designer to review the course.

5.5.4.2. PENDING –Establish procedures for stipend approval at Division or Department level. (This will be determined by institutional policies not yet in place.)

5.5.5. PENDING –All new online courses will be reviewed for instructional content and best practices. (This is being discussed by CTL at this time.)

5.5.5.1. Identify review process.

5.5.5.2. Adopt rubric for routine reviews of all online courses.

## 5.6. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures

5.6.1. Angel recommends 50M average course size.

5.6.2. Instructors will utilize LOR's (Learning Object Repositories) whenever appropriate to save server space.

5.6.3. Instructors will utilize compression software and procedures whenever appropriate to minimize course content.

Section 6	<b>eLearning Policies</b>	mm/dd/yy	-Effective
		11/__/08	-Revised
Policy 6.0 – 6.x	<b>Online Teaching</b>	eLearning Center	-Author

## 6.0 ONLINE TEACHING

As students are introduced to AC Online (Angel LMS), we must provide them with clear and consistent information about using the new learning environment.

### 6.1. Purpose

The purpose of Online Teaching Policy is to define best practices and procedures for teaching in the Angel LMS that will promote consistency and ease of use for online students.

### 6.2. Audience

Online Teaching Policy applies to all faculty who teach online, hybrid, or enhanced online courses.

### 6.3. Definitions

- 6.3.1. LMS- Learning Management System used to develop, deliver, and manage online classes.
- 6.3.2. LOR - A Learning Object Repository is a dedicated online space for course content that can be shared. The content in a LOR can be accessed by linking to it from other courses, which saves server space and simplifies editing of content that is shared among courses.
- 6.3.3. Traditional Course – Instruction delivered 100% face-to-face contact with the instructor. A disclaimer will be added to all traditional course offering information to alert students they are expected to use computers with internet capability to enhance their learning. (May be lecture, laboratory, lecture/laboratory, clinical, practicum, internship, cooperative experience.)

6.3.4. Online Course – Instruction delivered 100% over the Internet. (Note: Does not require a student to come to an Amarillo College campus for any portion of the course.)

6.3.5. Hybrid Course – Instruction delivered 50% online and 50% conducted through face-to-face contact. (Note: Seat time will be reduced by 50% when scheduling classrooms.)

6.3.6. Enhanced Online Course – An online course that requires a student attend face-to-face instruction that does not meet the hybrid course definition. (Note: Any course that has more than 50% and less than 100% in an online component.)

#### 6.4. Policy Statements

6.4.1. All instructors who teach online or hybrid classes will use the Angel LMS, effective Summer 2009.

6.4.2. The ITS Helpdesk must be contacted to add new members to a class (students, course assistants, course mentors, etc.).

6.4.3. All online students will have access to a Student Orientation.

#### 6.5. Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures

6.5.1. PENDING - The AC Online Student Orientation will be available to all students from their AC Online Personal Home Page.