CRISWELL COLLEGE

Approved By: President and Faculty
Date Approved: October 29, 2025
Effective Date: October 29, 2025

1. **Summary:** This policy establishes instructional requirements that are specific to online education at Criswell College.

2. **Rationale:** The nature of online education requires a policy that complements policies that pertain to on-campus courses and policies that pertain to all courses regardless of modality.

3. **Entities Affected:** instructors of online courses, students who register for online courses, Educational Technology staff, Registrar

4. **Definitions:**

   asynchronous: a method of online content delivery in which the student accesses that content at her or his own convenience, though assignment due dates pace the student throughout the semester/term.

   Canvas: Canvas is a web-based Learning Management System (LMS) used to support instruction for all Criswell College courses.

   Online education: education that uses internet technology to deliver instruction to students and to support regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors, whether synchronously or asynchronously.

   online course: a course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via internet technology.

   synchronous: a method of content delivery in which instructors and students enrolled in an online course meet "live," or "real time," using video-teleconferencing technology. Typically, neither the instructor nor students are in the same physical space during synchronous sessions.

   Hybrid-online courses: courses in which instructors and all students enrolled in them meet at scheduled times throughout the semester using synchronous sessions. The remaining direct faculty instruction is delivered using other means specified in this policy that students access asynchronously. Criswell College has two formats of Hybrid-online courses:

   1. *Traditional Hybrid Courses:* This hybrid design delivers the majority of course content asynchronously via video-based instructional materials. In addition, instructors must meet synchronously at scheduled class times throughout a semester/term to meet at least 25% of the direct faculty instruction required by the College's Credit Hour Policy to promote student engagement and instructor presence. These sessions are recorded and made available for subsequent review.

   2. *CrisFlex Courses*: This hybrid design includes two components: (1) an on-campus section that meets at designated times and days, and (2) an online section that permits students to participate through video-teleconferencing technology at the scheduled class time or to access the recorded class sessions asynchronously.

   3. Students enrolled in traditional hybrid courses and/or online sections of CrisFlex courses must pay the

designated Distance Education/Online fee.

5. Policy:

   a. **Compliance with Existing Policies and Procedures**

While presenting situations not typically encountered in on-campus classes, online instruction must nevertheless comply with policies and procedures established by the College related to class conduct, student management, and overall professionalism required by those policies and procedures. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Honesty Policy
- Attendance Policy (including Faculty Census Verification - SONIS procedure)
- Credit Hours Policy
- Faculty Employment Policy (e.g. office hours, student requests for information, etc.)
- Faculty Final Grades Input – SONIS procedure
- Graduate Education Policy
- Institutional Email Policy
- Professional Standards and Workplace Expectations Policy

   b. **Online Course Development**

The Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for approving courses to be taught online.

The Director of Educational Technology is responsible for working with instructors to develop, implement, and maintain all online courses according to guidelines and best practices associated with hybrid-online education.

   c. **Technology for Online Courses**

Canvas must be used to host/deliver all instructional materials, discussions, and assessments, and to provide links to tools, applications, and other resources external to Canvas that support teaching and learning.

Synchronous class sessions must use the online conferencing software designated by the College.

   d. **Direct Instruction Activities in Online Courses**

Activities that count for the direct faculty instruction required by the College's Credit Hour Policy typically represent interaction between students and/or the instructor related to the academic subject matter of the course. All synchronous courses will contain these elements:

     1. *Traditional Hybrid Courses*

- Provide recorded lectures/instruction which students watch asynchronously;
- the instructor and all students enrolled in an online course must meet synchronously at scheduled class times throughout a semester/term to meet at least 25% of the direct faculty instruction required by the College's Credit Hour Policy;
- instructors are free to schedule additional synchronous sessions as desired/required to meet course objectives. If these sessions are included as a graded course requirement, then the

sessions must be recorded for students who cannot attend and/or alternate direct instructional activities must be offered for them;

- assignments, tests, quizzes, and discussion boards for which the instructor provides feedback.

2. *CrisFlex Courses*

   a. On-campus format includes:

   - Class instruction and interaction;

   - general assessments consisting of assignments, tests, quizzes

   b. Online format includes:

   - Students can (1) attend the live version of class in which the instructor is present, participating in class discussion, or (2) watch recorded class instruction asynchronously;

   - assessments composed of assignments, tests, quizzes, and discussion boards for which the instructor provides feedback.

e. **Identity Verification**

Students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first synchronous session* in order to be properly identified.

At least once each semester/term, instructors must verify that each student enrolled and participating in that course is the individual whose picture is found in his or her Canvas profile. For enrolled Criswell students, this picture should be compared with the student's ID photo in SONIS. The instructor is free to determine how to verify the student's identity (e.g., live-streamed meetings, video assignments, scheduled video conference calls). Students enrolled in an online course are required to participate in this verification exercise. The instructor will maintain a record of when and how student identities were verified.

g. **Instructor Course Engagement**

For both the asynchronous component of CrisFlex courses and traditional synchronous courses, instructors or their designated teaching assistants are required to actively engage with students through the Canvas learning management system as part of the course's required contact hours. Acceptable forms of engagement include, but are not limited to, responding to discussion board posts, providing substantive feedback on assignments, and hosting synchronous class meetings or review sessions. Faculty office hours shall not be counted toward the fulfillment of this engagement requirement.

h. **Publication of Courses**

Courses must be published no later than two weeks prior to the start of the semester or term. At minimum, the course syllabus must be made available at the time of publication, even if no additional content is provided. Additional course materials may be required in advance when stipulated by course-sharing agreements or other institutional arrangements.

6. **Procedure:**

   a. **Implementation:** The Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for the selection of courses to be taught online; Director of Educational Technology is responsible for creating and maintaining procedures for the implementation of this policy, and for training and assisting instructors in these procedures.

   b. **Responsibility for Compliance:** Vice President of Academic Affairs

c. Notification: This policy will be published on the College's website. A summary of and excerpts from this policy will be published in the College's *Academic Catalog*.

   d. Policy Review: This policy will be regularly reviewed according to the College's policy review procedure.

For the Office of the President only:

Policy version: 1.0	Policy number: 3.019

Related policies:
>   Attendance Policy
>   Course-Sharing: Teaching Institution Policy
>   Credit Hours Policy
>   Faculty Employment Policy
>   Institutional Email Policy

Policy History

Version 1.0	October 29, 2025