

SUBJECT
Digital/Technology-Enhanced Learning
BACKGROUND

The mission, vision, values and strategic plan of Northern College will be the basis for the implementation and enforcement of this policy. We recognize that educational institutions worldwide are harnessing and leveraging the benefits provided by technology-enabled education to improve efficiency and effectiveness in teaching, learning and research activities. These technologies have the potential to enhance learner’s experiences, stimulate discussion, and promote creativity by enabling users to pursue world-class education in flexible learning environments.

Northern College embraces the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is committed to providing an inclusive technology-enhanced learning experience for all learners. We will continue to support accommodations for users with accessibility requirements in all programming while adhering to academic standards. We have a history of, and obligation to, reach out and provide education for those individuals in remote communities who may not otherwise have access to such opportunities without the benefit of technology-enabled resources. Northern College’s ability and willingness to do so puts forth the need to have a digital learning policy in place for all college community users.

POLICY

Northern College will provide staff and students with the required tools and training in order to succeed in technology-enhanced learning environments.

Northern College supports the intentional use of technology-enhanced learning to:

- Increase equity, enhance efficiency and improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Support and encourage the internal development of the digital strategy by promoting and providing guidelines for training and technical support.
- Provide information, resources and support services for technology-enabled education.
- Identify technology-enhanced teaching and learning needs.
- Encourage and support the use of technology-enabled education.
- Encourage the sharing of effective technology-enhanced teaching and learning practices.

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SCOPE

This policy details the course of action Northern College will pursue on all matters related to technology-enhanced learning. Its purpose is to define the guidelines and procedures in which Northern College will engage, to ensure uniformity and consistency is maintained in all technology-enhanced learning environments and initiatives. The policy also encourages users to actively participate in technology-enhanced learning and/or environments, as the strategy is designed to be foundational to core business and learning practices. The policy also acknowledges the need for support from other college community users, which may come in the form of professional development, to stay abreast of and maintain relevant digital technologies.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Digital:** Digital describes electronic technology that generates, stores, and processes data in terms of two states: positive and non-positive.
2. **eLearning:** Learning conducted via electronic media, including any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as video and web-conferencing technologies, and broadband internet services.
3. **Fully Online (Asynchronous or Synchronous):** Fully online courses are courses in which all activities are completed online with no required *physical face-to-face interaction* between students and faculty. (Virtually-facilitated face-to-face meetings/sessions may still be required in the fully online synchronous format). Fully online courses can be taken wherever there is adequate broadband internet access. This mode of delivery eliminates the need for participants to be on campus, yet still enables students the opportunity to participate in highly interactive and engaging learning environments.
4. **Web-Based Courses:** Refers to courses that are delivered in one of two ways, synchronous or asynchronous. With synchronized courses, students attend “live lectures” in an online environment. These courses are delivered to anywhere that students have access to high speed internet, to access web-based delivery platform.
5. **Asynchronous:** No in-person learning requirements; no scheduled (time-of-day-independent) requirements; fully accessible wherever there is adequate broadband internet access (including any examinations and/or proctored assessments).

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6. **Synchronous:** No physical in-person learning requirements, however, will require scheduled (time-of-day-dependent) online in-person requirements (may include content delivered via video and/or web-conferencing platforms); fully accessible wherever there is adequate broadband internet access (including any examinations and/or proctored assessments).
7. **Technology-Enhanced:** Refers to learning environments and courseware that use technology to deliver course materials including **interactive and/or collaborative activities**. Technology-enhanced course delivery does not necessarily result in the **reduction of face-to-face time and/or teaching contact hours between students and professors**. For example, online and face-to-face learning activities/environments can be thoughtfully integrated, maximizing the unique characteristics of each in order to enhance the quality of the learning experience. Technology-enhanced learning can include, but is not limited to: simulations, online surveys, student response systems/polling, backchannel tools, social media, digital cameras, tablets (for collaboration), games, virtual environments etc. The development of technology-enhanced learning/ environments focuses on increased student engagement and success.
8. **Delivery Modes:** Refers to the variety of methods used to interact with learners. Examples include, but are not limited to, traditional faculty-led, face-to-face learning environments, video and/or web-conferencing learning environments, online learning environments, including asynchronous formats, and self-directed learning environments.


PRINCIPLES/GUIDELINES

1. Define how technology-enabled education can assist and facilitate learning for the benefit of the learning community by ensuring and promoting ease of use of tools and resources.
2. Provide greater access to quality education by adopting technology-enhanced tools and resources.
3. Provide guidelines for technology-enhanced development of materials that are aligned with evidence-based design principles and pedagogical approaches.
4. Improve efficiency in the administration and management of technology-enhanced learning and environments using innovative approaches with responsible security requirements and fiscal restraints.

RESPONSIBILITY

All faculty, students and staff have the responsibility within their roles to affectively use Northern College's learning resources and technology.

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APPROVED BY PRESIDENT


Dr. Audrey J. Penner


Date
STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Northern College wishes to acknowledge the work of:

- University of Namibia
- Conestoga College
- Fanshawe College
- Online Learning Consortium

<https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/updated-e-learning-definitions-2/>

REFERENCE(S)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA): Our online development currently meets WCAG 2.0 AA standards with allowances made by AODA. <http://www.aoda.ca/wcag/>

AODA Procurement Policy # B-5:

<http://noraction.northern.on.ca/nc/index.php/revised-discipline-policy-new-aoda-procurement-policy-and-guidelines/>

Northern College Student Handbook:

<http://www.mynorthern.ca/academic-services/>

Policies on Learning Training and Development from Government of Canada:

<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12405>

Northern College Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

<http://www.northern.on.ca/docs/accessibility/MultiyearAccessibilityPlanDecember16.pdf>

Bring your own device (BYOD) Policy: <http://www.mynorthern.ca/it-resources/>

Academic Policies: <http://www.mynorthern.ca/academic-policies/>

- Northern College Student Assessment and Evaluation Policy # A-26
- Northern College Student Assessment and Evaluation Procedure # A-26-PR-1

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