

TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DISTANCE EDUCATION PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES

Faculty Responsibility for Content Control – As with all instruction, faculty are responsible for the content related to their courses, whether that content is published on the TCC's web site, through the Blackboard course management system (CMS), or through any other media or resource provided by TCC or the VCCS. Faculty responsibilities include any content posted by students for their courses. Faculty are expected to promote and maintain the highest standards of academic quality and responsibility. Content must be relevant to the course and delivered in a timely manner. Faculty-developed online content (e.g., course materials created by an individual TCC faculty member for their TCC students) must reside on TCC or VCCS servers. Course materials authored or owned by external entities (e.g., publishers, government agencies, other educational institutions, public web sites, etc.), and residing on non-TCC or non-VCCS resources, should be linked and updated appropriately by TCC faculty.

Faculty and students are required to comply with all TCC and VCCS policies, as well as local, state, and federal laws concerning appropriate use of computers and the Internet. TCC resources may not be used to create web pages for personal or commercial businesses, except as provided in an approved program of instruction. TCC reserves the right, after consultation with faculty and the academic division concerned, to remove any faculty or student content that may be deemed inappropriate.

Copyrights – Faculty should be aware that copyright laws and their interpretations change frequently. Also, the applications of copyright laws and intellectual property guidelines to courses delivered in hybrid and online formats can be distinctly different from the applications of those laws and guidelines to courses delivered face-to-face. "Fair use" guidelines have been modified by several new amendments to and interpretations of copyright law and should be reviewed carefully before faculty assume that copyrighted materials may be used without permission. Faculty should carefully consider the use of copyrighted or trademarked materials; what is accepted as "fair use" in the classroom may violate the law if used online. Information and guidelines on copyright law and compliance is provided on the TCC LRC web site at <http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/guides/copyrt.htm>. Faculty may also contact educational technology staff with any copyright or "fair use" questions.

Beyond legitimate "fair use" exceptions, faculty must obtain written permission before including copyrighted text, photographs, audio, video, or other media into any content delivered to students or the public. These written documents must be sent to the Associate Vice President for Educational Technology for TCC's records. Notice of copyright is not required, but strongly recommended. The registered trademark symbol ® must be used to show use of registered trademarks.

Ownership of materials and any other copyright or intellectual property rights issues will be governed by current VCCS intellectual property policies (see *VCCS Policy Manual*, Section 12).

Student Content – Individual student web pages or other content may be published on the college's academic web servers or other resources only when the pages are associated with a particular course and during the duration of the course. Exceptions may be made for courses in programs that accumulate portfolios of student work. The course instructor is responsible for the content of the page and adding and removing the pages from his/her web directory on the academic web site. The instructor has the authority to remove any student web pages or other

content that does not adhere to TCC or VCCS policies or that are deemed inappropriate by the instructor or another college official.

Faculty and Student Email – All TCC students are assigned a VCCS email account as part of their enrollment in the student information system (SIS). College email correspondence with students falls under the privacy restrictions governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA – see *below*). Because of this restriction and other institutional policies, faculty and students must send and receive all official email correspondence through their TCC or VCCS email addresses. Students may choose to have such email forwarded to another, personal email account, but should be cautioned that they remain personally responsible for content forwarded to an address other than their official VCCS email address. TCC cannot be responsible for the security of private information not delivered through or stored within its own or VCCS systems. Faculty and students can most easily access their VCCS email through the MyTCC portal at <https://tcc.my.vccs.edu/jsp/home.jsp>.

Intellectual Property – The Virginia Community College System has specific guidelines for the administration of intellectual property rights at member colleges. Faculty are encouraged to read section 12 of the VCCS Policy Manual prior to the creation of course content. This policy is available at <http://www.vccs.edu/WhoWeAre/PolicyManual.aspx>. Additional information on intellectual property and copyright is available at <http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/guides/copyrt.htm>.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – Release of any personally identifiable student information is generally prohibited by [federal regulations](#) under FERPA. Some “directory information” may be released without prior written consent of the student, but the amount and type of directory information is very limited at TCC. Refer to the resources at <http://www.tcc.edu/students/admissions/registrar/FACfaculty.html> and in the “Student Conduct” section of the *TCC Student Handbook*.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - ADA sets accessibility standards for web pages for people with disabilities. TCC strives to comply with ADA standards and provide accessibility to all students. To the extent feasible, all course content delivered via TCC technologies should be ADA-compliant.

Testing and Assessment – The Blackboard CMS includes rich testing and assessment tools. Additionally, each TCC campus has testing center facilities that allow faculty to schedule examinations and quizzes independent of their presence. Regardless of how testing and assessment is conducted or delivered, faculty should make every effort to ensure the integrity, security, and validity of their testing and assessment procedures.

Student Evaluations – All TCC online courses are expected to incorporate the standard student evaluation as per current TCC policies and procedures.

Blackboard – TCC and the Virginia Community College System have officially adopted Blackboard as the primary courseware management system available for use by faculty and students. Faculty are strongly encouraged to use Blackboard's course management, assessment, and communication features when pedagogically and administratively appropriate since college and VCCS support systems are already in place for these tools. Faculty are also encouraged to explore a range of media and methods to provide the most successful learning for their students and to develop and use whatever media and methods are appropriate for their disciplines and course goals. They should discuss these approaches with the Educational Technology staff to ensure appropriate tools and support. TCC requires all online classes to

have at least a Blackboard course entry point with clear links to any specific course content that resides elsewhere. Faculty and students should access Blackboard through the MyTCC portal at <https://tcc.my.vccs.edu/jsp/home.jsp>.

Required Training – All faculty teaching online for the first time must successfully complete a prescribed training program for online teaching. Three training courses are currently accepted to meet this requirement: TCC's Online Academy, TCC's Online Boot Camp (funded by an ITTL grant), and the VCCS TOP (Teaching Online Project). The Associate Vice President for Educational Technology may waive the required training requirement upon request by a faculty member and after a thorough demonstration of basic Blackboard and instructional design competencies. Additional Blackboard and instructional design training are available to faculty throughout the academic year.

Requirements for New Online Courses – When a course will be taught online by an instructor for the first time in 36 months, the faculty member must complete the *Online Course Approval Form* (see <http://www.tcc.edu/students/DTLS/faculty/olstepsnew.htm#form>). Even experienced online faculty must complete this form and process when teaching a specific course online for the first time in 36 months. This form includes three parts: the faculty member completes Part I, a peer reviewer completes Part II, and the appropriate academic dean completes Part III. All three parts must then be submitted to the associate vice president for educational technology for final approval before the course may be offered.

TCC and VCCS Policies – All faculty and students are expected to abide by all TCC and VCCS policies, including but not limited to, the policies and standards found in the following:

1. VCCS Policy Manual
(<http://myfuture.vccs.edu/WhoWeAre/PolicyManual/tabid/103/Default.aspx>)
2. Information Technology Employee Acceptable Use Agreement
(<http://www.vccs.edu/FacultyStaff/InformationTechnology/Standards/ITEmployeeAcceptableUseAgreement/tabid/403/Default.aspx>)
3. Information Security
(<http://www.vccs.edu/FacultyStaff/InformationTechnology/Security/tabid/354/Default.aspx>) and
(<http://myfuture.vccs.edu/FacultyStaff/InformationTechnology/Standards/InformationSecurityStandard/tabid/404/Default.aspx>)
4. Information Technology Student/Patron Acceptable Use Agreement
(<http://www.vccs.edu/FacultyStaff/InformationTechnology/Standards/StudentPatronAcceptableUseAgreement/tabid/265/Default.aspx>)
5. TCC Full-time Faculty Handbook
(<http://www.tcc.edu/faculty/handbook/>)
6. TCC Adjunct Faculty Handbook
(<http://www.tcc.edu/faculty/adjunct/handbook/>)

Additional Resources and Recommended Readings:

“Building Online Learning Communities” by Michele Marits
[Building Online Learning Communities tips.doc](#)

“Blackboard Basics” [Blackboard Basics](#)