

Special Note

Only the first four lines of text on the first page are the actual recommendation for a Web Instruction Oversight Committee. Everything else is mere suggestion.

The recommendation for a Web Instruction Oversight Committee was approved by the Academic Senate at the end of the Fall 2001 semester.

The recommendation has been in the hands of the Vice President for Instruction and all the deans since December 2001. No Oversight Committee has been appointed as of this date.

The Vice President for Instruction has verbally informed the Senate Web Committee that the Instructor's Information Sheet for Web courses (designed for use by an Oversight Committee) may soon be employed in test cases for new Web courses.

January 30, 2003
Senate Web Committee

Recommendation for a Web Course Oversight Committee

The Faculty Senate recommends that a Web Course Oversight Committee be formed. This committee will be composed of 4 individuals. It will be responsible for reviewing and evaluating all Web courses to determine compliance with the *Principles of Good Practice for Academic Degree and Certificate Programs and Credit Courses Offered Electronically* as interpreted in the institutional document *Odessa College Guidelines for Courses Offered Electronically*.

Special Note

The details that follow should not be viewed as part of the general recommendation above. They are suggestions only. Beyond its general charge of reviewing/evaluating Web courses, the committee should feel free to re-structure its composition, policies, record-keeping, and operating procedures as it sees fit. Since the committee will be a new entity on campus there is no precedent to fall back on and the committee will have to define itself in a sense. Still, the specific suggestions included below could be considered as guiding ideas in the formation and operation of the Web Course Oversight Committee.

I. Details of Committee Membership

The four members of the committee will be these:

1. Academic (2 positions)

Two full-time faculty members serving two-year terms will be appointed by the Senate. The first will be a member of the Senate, the vice president unless the Senate prefers to appoint otherwise, to provide a standing faculty presence. The other will be an experienced Web instructor. When a course is being reviewed, the faculty members' responsibility will pertain to academic matters only, including but not limited to these examples:

- Is the course as comprehensive and rigorous as the classroom version?
- Are departmental course requirements and guidelines being observed?
- Is the course sufficiently different than the classroom version to justify offering it on the Web? (E.g., does it employ unique capabilities of the Web, such as audio-visual multimedia, chat, email, newsgroups, page design, etc.)

The individuals holding these positions will consult with the chair of an instructor under review. The chair will approve the content and quality of the course by signing the *Instructor's Information Sheet*, as explained elsewhere; the two faculty committee members will focus on matters pertaining to general pedagogical concerns as seen from a teacher's perspective, such as coherence, effectiveness, clarity, etc.

2. Technical (1 position)

The Odessa College Webmaster will permanently occupy this position. If the Webmaster's position is temporarily vacant, the head of Instructional Technology will fill it with full privileges. The Webmaster's concern will obviously focus on technical aspects of the course, and the general concern will be these two questions: Do the technical aspects of the course work for students and do they work on the OC server? Here are examples of specific matters the Webmaster will focus on, though the list is not all-inclusive:

- Is the HTML code clean and functioning adequately?
- Is site navigation effective and clear to students?
- Are course Web pages too bulky for the OC server?
- Are there any security problems?

3. Administrative (1 position)

Of necessity this position will be filled by the Dean of Workforce, Continuing and Distance Education, or his/her appointee. The exact responsibilities of this position cannot be fully defined for a few semesters at least, but the general intention is to have this individual deal with legal questions such as copyright and any issues involving Odessa College's image. Some of the questions the individual will deal with include but are not limited to these:

- Are copyright laws being violated?
- What type of extracurricular material, if any, should be included on the Websites of all courses (OC logos, for example, or links to other areas of the college such as counselors, LRC, registrar, etc.).
- Does a particular course comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)?

II. Various Matters

1. The committee will deal with full Web courses, Web-Enhanced courses and everything in between, but not Web-Assisted courses. ("Web-Enhanced" refers to courses which are at least fifty-percent online; "Web-Assisted" courses are less than fifty-percent online.)
2. The committee's area of responsibility will include only courses on the Internet and World Wide Web. Compressed video courses, telecourses, and off-campus classes will not be part of the committee's charge.
3. The Administrative position will chair the committee. Committee records, both hardcopy and electronic, will also be kept by the Administration position. Any member of the committee can call a meeting; the chair will set the date of the meeting within a reasonable time after the request.
4. The committee must meet at least once per semester. Much of its work (particularly the review and approval of courses) can be handled without meeting. When a *Course Information Sheet* is turned in, for example, members can review the course at their convenience but before a date they have determined. If there are no problems they can simply express approval by signing the proper document.
5. If any member of the committee determines that a Web course does not comply with the *Odessa College Guidelines for Courses Offered Electronically*, he/she will work with the instructor to achieve compliance. The other committee members will be notified that such a modification is underway. Keeping in mind that the course may be underway when non-compliance is determined, all effort will be made to resolve the issue in the shortest time possible.
6. The committee will define itself as experience dictates. Its mission, policies, and procedures will be expanded or amended as its work continues. These changes, however, must be approved by a majority vote; no committee member has the power to enact unilateral changes. The changes should also be reported in a timely manner to the Faculty Senate.

III. Process Overview

The following is a suggestion of how the entire process will work. The procedure will obviously need to be amended as experience dictates.

1. Faculty will be notified of the formation of the committee and will be invited to pick up copies of the *Odessa College Guidelines for Courses Offered Electronically* and the *Instructor's Information Sheet* from the Dean of Workforce, Continuing and Distance Education.
2. Instructors will notify the Overview Committee of their intent to offer a Web course by turning in the *Instructor's Information Sheet*. There will be three stages to this notification process as follows:
 - a) ***A month or two before the semester starts--the semester before if possible***
 - The instructor will turn in the *Information Sheet* with only a minimum amount of information (name, course, semester). This will serve as a simple declaration of intent.
 - b) ***Two weeks before classes start***
 - A new *Information Sheet* which reflects the basic structure of the course will be submitted.
 - c) ***During (but before the end of) the semester***
 - A final *Information Sheet* reflecting the entire course will be submitted when the information becomes available.
3. At each stage the faculty member will be notified (hardcopy and email both?) of the committee's determination regarding compliance.
4. For previously-taught Web courses:
 - a) Current or past Web instructors will turn in an *Instructor's Information Sheet* and undergo review as their courses(s) are taught. Instructors teaching more than one course per semester will only need to review one (their own choice).
 - b) Instructors making substantial changes to a course, including any alteration on the *Instructor's Information Sheet*, will inform their department chair and together they will decide if a new review is necessary. This will obviously be a personal judgment, but the decision will be made by the instructor and chair in close consultation, with the chair being ultimately responsible.