



## EDUCATION POLICY COURSE DEVELOPMENT

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**EFFECTIVE:** January 2003  
**REVISED:** December 2008  
**RELATED POLICIES:** [New Program Proposals](#)

### **POLICY**

Given factors such as geographical location, curricular specialization, and limited resources, Northern Lights College recognizes that various forms of distributed-learning courses may enhance educational opportunities for students. However, the college also recognizes that face-to-face courses play a vital role in its educational services. Therefore, distributed-learning courses will be considered when they increase access to educational services at locations where face-to-face instruction cannot be offered by appropriately qualified faculty or where face-to-face offerings are impractical for students or programs.

Further, the college recognizes that the responsible consideration of course development must address the conditions of course delivery (piloting arrangements, technical/clerical support, class size, configuration of instructional time - including the realities of course preparation, etc.)

### **PROCEDURE**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### **COURSE DEVELOPMENT:**

For the purposes of this document, *Course Development* involves the design (ranging from conception to implementation) of new courses or substantial changes to content or delivery of existing courses. (Refer to existing ADMIN. GUIDELINES on Course Revision IV.B.37.)

#### **FACE-TO-FACE COURSES:**

Are offered by the traditional mode of delivery, whereby an instructor and all students usually convene in the same physical location. It is increasingly common for face-to-face courses to be augmented by technologies that enhance learning opportunities both within and beyond the classroom setting.

#### **DISTRIBUTED-LEARNING COURSES:**

Are offered by alternate or hybrid modes of delivery, whereby an instructor and some or all students do not usually convene in the same physical location. In distributed-learning courses, alternate modes of delivery may include technologies such as teleconference, video-conference, whiteboards, web-conferencing, and combinations thereof, etc. Alternate modes of delivery may also include the exchange of written material by post.

### **1. INITIATIVES FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

At the local or regional level, initiatives regarding course development may originate among members of communities served by the college, college faculty, college administration, or other interested parties. At the provincial level, initiatives for

course development may originate among provincial consortiums. In both cases, initiatives for course development should be conveyed to the appropriate Dean.

## **2. RESEARCH**

Where the Dean believes that an initiative for course development merits consideration, the Dean will designate an appropriate faculty member or members to prepare a brief report. Particularly where new courses are at issue, the preparation of this report may require faculty release time. The report will address considerations under "A" or "B" below. In cases where a cluster of closely related courses are being considered, such courses may be treated as a group.

### **A. FACE TO FACE COURSE(S)**

1. If the development initiative involves a new course, describe how this course offers the potential for a significant increase in enrollments within the college region. Describe how this potential has been assessed.
2. To which faculty member or members would course development be assigned? On what basis?
3. Explain how much faculty release-time would be required for course development.
4. Would development and/or delivery entail clerical support? If so, what arrangements will be made for the time involved in such support?
5. Who has been consulted internally concerning the proposal? Have all faculty within the relevant discipline, program, and related program areas been consulted about the initiative? How have faculty responded to the idea?
6. What external consultation has occurred with other institutions, advisory committees, certifying bodies, etc.? What response has such consultation generated?
7. Where a new course is under consideration, what would be an appropriate number of weekly contact hours? Would the course require labs, tutorials, etc.?
8. Do current provisions in the Faculty Collective Agreement adequately address delivery considerations involving duty hours and class size? If not, elaborate.
9. On which campuses would the course be offered? Are such offerings sufficient? Which instructor(s) would deliver the course?
10. Course development may raise questions about copyright and ownership of intellectual property. See Common Table Agreement (Article 5), CANCOPY provisions, etc. How have such potential questions been addressed?

11. Are provisions in place for piloting, course assessment, and course revision? If so, what arrangements will address these concerns?
12. Where would the new course be marketed? What strategies will be used to ensure effective marketing?

## **B. DISTRIBUTED LEARNING COURSE(S)**

1. Describe how the initiative for course development offers the potential for a significant increase in enrollments within and/or beyond the college region. Describe how has this potential has been assessed.
2. A range of technologies can be used to provide distributed learning. Given curriculum, etc., what would be the most effective means of providing distributed learning in this case? Comment on the college's ability to provide the preferred mode of distributed learning. What will be the method of delivery?
3. On what basis would course development be assigned to a faculty member or members? Describe the faculty member's technological experience, training, and available software/hardware to complete this task. If not adequate, how will this be addressed?
4. Explain how much release time will be required for course development. Particularly in the case of online courses, extra time may be required. Such release time may be needed before and will certainly be needed after the approval process. (See attached Flow Chart)
5. What arrangements will be made for the provision of adequate clerical and/or technical support for course development and delivery? Arrangements would include the following: registration, grade outs, course content support, technical support for students, textbook orders, course material upgrades, access to library resources for students.
6. Who has been consulted internally concerning this proposal? Have all faculty within the relevant discipline, program, and related program areas been consulted about the initiative? What response has this consultation generated?
7. What external consultation has occurred with other institutions advisory committees, certifying bodies, etc.? What response has such consultation generated? In particular, are other institutions offering a similar course or course via distributed learning? What are the reasons to proceed with this course?
8. Which instructor(s) would deliver the course? How often? Describe the instructor's technological experience, training, and the available software/hardware.

9. Where distributed learning is under consideration, current provisions in the Faculty Collective Agreement addresses delivery considerations involving the full range of instructional duties and class size. Particularly in the case of online courses, for example, **specifically configured** time may be required to interact with individual students, respond to postings, etc. Such considerations may also have implications for appropriate enrollment caps. Similarly, hybrid modes of delivery may require special consideration. What specific arrangements will be made to address these concerns?
10. Questions about copyright and intellectual property may be of particular significance in course development involving distributed learning. See Common Table Agreement (Article 5), CANCOPY provisions, etc. How have such potential questions been addressed?
11. Piloting provisions, specialized assessment procedures/instruments, and ongoing course revision will be important in distributed-learning courses. What specific arrangements will be made to address such concerns?
12. Would the distributed-learning course be marketed regionally, provincially, and/or globally? What strategies will be used to ensure effective marketing?

Upon receiving a report addressing the foregoing issues, the Dean will decide whether or not to proceed with the approval process.

### **3. APPROVAL PROCESS**

Where the Dean supports course development involving new courses or substantial changes to the content or delivery of existing courses, s/he will present the aforementioned report to the appropriate bodies. Normally, the sequence of review will involve the Deans Committee, the Administration Committee, and the Education Council. Where course development involves distributed-learning, the union will also be notified and/or consulted in accordance with Article 23 of the Faculty collective Agreement.

### **4. IMPLEMENTATION**

As previously noted, release time for many of the specific activities involved in course development will likely be needed and should logically occur both before and after the approval process is completed. Accordingly, to allow for appropriate implementation, research and approval should begin well before the intended date of delivery. Where certain forms of distributed learning are involved, the entire process of course development may require 9-12 months; approximately 3 months for research and approval; an additional 6 months for design. In some cases, the process may take longer.

Student Services should be informed of new courses as early as possible during the implementation process.

**5. FLOW-CHART SUMMARY OF COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

**Stage One:** Initiative presented to Dean



**Stage Two:** If the Dean believes the initiative warrants further consideration, s/he designates personnel to prepare a brief but detailed report.

**Format A:** F-to-F Courses    **Format B:** D-L Courses

After considering the report, the Dean will decide whether or not to proceed with approval.



**Stage Three:** Should the Dean decide to pursue approval, relevant bodies will be consulted?

Report considered by Deans Committee

Program guide and course outline presented to the Education Council.



**Stage Four:** Implementation involving curricular details and/or technological applications. Student Services should be notified of the forthcoming offering.