## Recommendations to Fulfill SPOT Recertification Requirements

## Approved by the Distance Learning Committee

## April 9, 2019

The purpose of the Distance Learning Committee (DLC) is to discuss, review, and evaluate distance learning modes of instruction, and recommend and promote best practices and new opportunities for distance learning and teaching that foster equitable access and student success.

The Faculty Association contract now specifies “The SPOT certification is valid for a period of four (4) years. Every four (4) years professors will be required to obtain a recertification through a condensed SPOT training approved by the Academic Senate, not to exceed four (4) hours. By July 30, 2020, all faculty assigned to DL courses shall have a current SPOT certification and/or recertification.”

SPOT recertification falls within the purview of the purpose of the DLC. By the deadline of June 30, 2020, about 160 SPOT-certified faculty will need to have completed the recertification process. The DLC discussed avenues for SPOT recertification in preparation for making recommendations to the Academic Senate. The DLC set the objectives for recertification to be:

1. Relevant to timely topics and regulatory changes
2. Supportive of faculty efforts to provide the best possible online learning environment for students
3. Free/inexpensive, or at least not an economic burden to faculty (since many online faculty are adjuncts)
4. Convenient for faculty to complete, especially given the short time frame cited in the contract
5. Able to be tracked via POD (the DLC is not an administrative unit)

To meet objectives 1 and 2, the DLC recommended the following topics to be of importance to keep online faculty up-to-date with the myriad regulatory and technological changes that inform this field.

* Regulations updates. This topic includes information faculty must know to be compliant with laws about distance learning and includes services and expectations the college provides to support faculty in meeting these obligations. This topic was thought to be important enough that a one-hour course would be required each recertification cycle.
* Updates to or advanced use of the LMS and integrated programs. (Remedial or Introduction to the LMS courses would not count.)
* Accessibility requirements, strategies, and resources.
* Regular and effective contact requirements, pedagogy, strategies, and resources.
* Aside from requiring the Regulations update, the DLC recommends that faculty be able to “mix and match” other acceptable courses in order to focus on improving their personal skill set.
* The DLC suggests surveying current online faculty on an on-going basis to determine what faculty identify as their needs and amending the list to reflect needs.

To meet objectives 3, 4, and 5, the DLC recommended that the DL Coordinators and the FCLT create workshops in POD that could be offered either online, in hybrid form, or in-person.

* It seemed important to offer flexibility in delivery. It was noted that either online or in-person might be more effective based on the topic.
* Online courses could use some form of attendance/participation verification to ensure that faculty were spending at least one hour in them. Alternatively, online courses could be offered as a one-hour synchronous workshops via Zoom.
* POD is integrating a new system, Cornerstone, which can track in-house training and provides a “transcript” of completed courses so faculty can easily view their progress.

Alternatives to in-house courses were considered to increase convenience and cost-effectiveness for faculty. The DLC felt strongly that courses from @ONE were acceptable for SPOT recertification.

* @ONE course completion is typically marked with a Badge. POD will research if they can integrate these Badges into a faculty account. Badges serve as an easy-to-track marker of completion.
* @ONE-sponsored conferences and workshops, such as the Online Teaching Conference or CanInnovate, can be added as External Training in the new Cornerstone system.
* Since the contract sets the recertification cycle to occur every four years, the DLC recommends that pertinent FCLT or @ONE courses that faculty attended from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020 be counted toward recertification.

Sincerely,

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Co-Chair of the Distance Learning Committee