

SAS faculty-approved resolution on Online/Hybrid Course Proposals, May 7, 2013

Over the past several years, the SAS Curriculum Committee has been asked to consider a number of proposed new courses to be offered in online or hybrid format, as well as (in some cases) adaptations of existing courses to those formats. All new courses regardless of format come to the Committee and then the SAS Faculty for review, but there has been no requirement for the consideration of the adaptation of existing courses. There have been concerns (here and nationwide) about the quality of such courses, especially those which are fully online. Given our other experiences with new modes of delivery - for example, the extremely condensed time format of Winter session courses - the Committee has discussed over the course of the past several years what would best ensure the quality of such courses for our students. The Committee passed unanimously the recommendations below (at its meeting on April 2, 2013) and presented them for a vote of the faculty on May 7, 2013 where they were approved.

The following requirements will apply to SAS undergraduate courses offered for credit in a fully online or hybrid format. Fully online refers to those courses with a severely limited number of possible in-person meetings, including exams; hybrid refers to those courses with a significant portion of meetings online, roughly 1/3 to 1/2.

Completely new online or hybrid courses will come to the SAS Curriculum Committee and then to the full faculty for approval, as is the case for all new courses. The information required in the proposal of such courses, in addition to the usual requirements as for traditional-format courses, will include the items below.

Online or hybrid versions of existing SAS courses will come to the SAS Curriculum Committee for approval, but will not require a vote of the full faculty, similar to the procedure for Winter Session courses. The information required in the proposal of such courses will include syllabi for both the traditional version and the online or hybrid version, and the url of the web site for the for the online or hybrid version, if available, as well as the items below.

After at most 3 years of offering, a report on comparative assessment will be provided to the SAS Assessment Committee, including access to the web site for the course, a departmental evaluation of the success of the format, and information on any changes to course.

Online/hybrid issues to be addressed in course proposals.

- A. Description of pedagogical reasons for an online/hybrid version of the course and its appropriateness. Comparison with the traditional format of this or similar courses, and identification of which elements substitute for what, spelled out.
- B. Limits on class size, and expectations of demands on course instructors, clearly spelled out and justified.
- C. Qualifications of the student target audience and prerequisites clearly spelled out and justified.
- D. Qualifications of the instructor(s) for online instruction clearly spelled out.
- E. Numbers of hours and timing of required student online involvement clearly spelled out, as well as all other expectations of what students must do and when.
- F. Rubric for evaluation of student online participation spelled out.
- G. Measures for ensuring academic integrity, and specifically identity integrity, for the course. (For examples, testing issues need to be addressed in courses that involve exams.)