**Regional Higher Education Online Scheduling and Payment Policy**

*Approved by the RHE Deans on May 15, 2018*

*Updated July 17, 2018*

Given the increased focus on online course delivery, the need to maximize efficiencies, and the potential opportunities presented by a regional tuition guarantee program, it is necessary to clarify a system-wide philosophy and approach to online course scheduling. A unified online scheduling approach will maximize effective use of faculty expertise across the system and create a more neutral financial environment.

These policies will be revisited following the recommendations of the RHE Study Group and the Online Task Force.

**Scheduling Process *(Effective Fall 2018)***

Scheduling of online courses will be based on system wide student enrollment needs and prior enrollment trends. An annual online course-planning (scheduling) summit, comprised of RHE Central Staff and a representative from each regional campus dean’s office, will be held during the summer or fall semester to plan for the subsequent academic year. However, this annual schedule will be re-reviewed prior to each academic term in order to ensure that priorities, needs, and resources for online courses are still in alignment with the original plan.

Prior to the course-planning (scheduling) summit, each campus will work to collect and compile the following information for the identified timeframe:

* Faculty load needs
* Program course needs, in consultation with the program coordinators
* Areas of faculty expertise, based on teaching approvals and in consultation with program coordinators

The online schedule will adhere to the following standards:

* Individual course capacities will be based on RHE or departmental standards
* Course offerings will reflect regional online courses on the online tab and on each regional campus tab *(TENTATIVE, Fall 2018. Requires OIT)*
* Development of the schedule will consider course sharing with the Athens campus
* Performance considerations (which may include course evaluation information) can be used to determine staffing for online courses
* Once courses are identified for online delivery, staffing will be prioritized within the discipline and/or area of expertise by:
  1. GROUP I, II, IV on load (includes early retirement faculty on 1/3 option)
  2. GROUP I, II, IV overload; maintaining the one overload per term cap
  3. Early retirement faculty on 1/3 option
  4. Course sharing or splitting options with the Athens campus (as appropriate)
  5. Administrative overload; maintaining the one overload per term cap
  6. Adjunct faculty (includes rehired, retired faculty)

**Combined Course Sections**

In cases where courses are shared or split with either the Athens Campus or eCampus, the total combined capacity and enrollment will be considered for both scheduling and compensation purposes.

**Course Capacities *(Effective Spring 2019)***

Unless otherwise determined to be higher or lower by an Athens academic unit or by a RHECC recommendation to and subsequent approval by the RHE Executive Dean for RHE programs, regional online courses will default to a minimum capacity of 35. However, this does not preclude courses from being scheduled with capacities greater than 35, nor does it suggest that courses cannot / will not exceed enrollments of 35.

Minimum course enrollment for online courses, regardless of term, will be 15. Exceptions to the 15 enrollment minimum will be considered by the dean on a case-by-case basis for enrollments of 10-14 students. Individual online courses with fewer than 10 students will be cancelled. Circumstances for consideration may include student degree progression, new course/program launch, course sharing etc.

Online courses will use the “waitlist” feature in the scheduling system to manage and understand student enrollment and scheduling needs. The waitlist of a fully enrolled course will help faculty and their “home” campus dean or associate dean collaborate on next steps. Current and future options include:

1. Proceed with current schedule: full class with a waitlist, no additional “seats”
2. Increase course capacity: additional students would enroll first from the waitlist
3. Add a course section with the same capacity

**Compensation Policies *(Effective Spring 2019)***

*On load, Online Course*: course capacities will align with RHE or academic unit expectations. There is no additional compensation for course enrollments up to the identified capacities.

In cases where the RHE default minimum course capacity of 35 is used:

* Enrollment of 36-50 will receive overload incremental pay
* Enrollment over 50 assumes use of a course facilitator

*Overload, Online Course*: an overload, online course compensation rate chart will be developed annually, adjusted as appropriate based on the overload rates established by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. The overload, online chart will be posted to the RHE site.

The faculty member’s “home” campus, regardless of course location or delivery mode, will initiate overload contracts. Load and overload will be determined by considering all courses for a particular term. Per approved May 2017 RHE payment policies, overload is calculated on the lowest enrolled course. Lowest enrolled course will be determined based on all courses scheduled during the term, regardless of regional campus.

Courses with approved (department or RHECC) capacities lower than 35:

* Approved capacity will define the “full pay” enrollment for overload
* Enrollment above the approved capacity will initiate eligibility for facilitator use
  + Enrollment within 20% of the approved capacity: facilitator use not required
  + No additional pay

Courses with approved (department or RHECC) capacities:

* Once the identified capacity is reached, overload will be calculated based on the compensation chart
* Enrollment above the approved capacity will initiate eligibility for facilitator use
  + Enrollment within 20% of the approved capacity: facilitator use may not be required
  + Facilitator use assumed at/above 50

**Facilitators**

Online courses require use of an approved facilitator when enrollment exceeds 50 students. Facilitators must be hired through existing university hiring processes and be approved for course facilitation based on academic unit or program expectations. Facilitator pay and facilitator supervisor pay documents will be reviewed on an annual basis and be published on the RHE site. All course facilitators should go through training prior to serving as a facilitator. All course instructors and facilitators must meet departmental or program requirements for teaching courses online.