



Policies and Guidelines for Using Blackboard

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Background

The Virginia Office of EMS has adopted Blackboard as a statewide Learning Management System (LMS) for certified EMS providers and students.

Blackboard is known as a Learning Management Systems (LMS) which constitutes a package of tools to deliver knowledge, grading, communication, and evaluation of individual student progress. Blackboard is one of the most popular LMS' in the US and it provides an intuitive interface along with all of the necessary parameters required for educators and students.

We adopted Blackboard so that certified Education Coordinators can create content for all Virginia EMS providers to be able to access. As content is created and made available to the public, Virginia EMS providers will find Blackboard to be a one-stop shop for CAT 1 and CAT 2 continuing education.

Introduction to Policies and Guidelines

This document has been designed to set out the policies and guidelines related to offering educational programs on Blackboard. These policies are set in order to ensure that the quality of online EMS education courses offered in Virginia meet the requisite national standards—specifically for continuing education programs.

Continuing education programs offered on Blackboard are considered F3 Online Distributive Continuing Education by the National Registry and OEMS as defined by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE)—<http://www.capce.org>. More about CAPCE and the role they play in the national EMS scene can be found at: <https://nationaltelemetryassociation.org/what-capce-is-and-why-it-matters/>

Applying Education Coordinators must demonstrate that they are capable of delivering online courses which will meet the requirements of the National Registry and OEMS.

Recent years have seen a profound change in the use of technologies in all levels of education. Simply transferring a face-to-face teaching model online does not equal understanding the different learning techniques required of the online environment. However, online courses can enable a more efficient and effective way of learning which can be very satisfying for a student if learning is carried out diligently. Course students can adapt the pace of learning to their competences, construct their own learning independently and share their insights with others.

Specific attention needs to be given to the qualifications of the course team. Designing and delivering online courses demand specific skills and the technology used for these courses needs to be kept up-to-date and match with the requirements of both educators and learners.

Course Content

Course content deals specifically with curriculum and course design. The content of the course must be meaningful, of high intellectual quality, and up-to-date. In order to develop EMS providers along their career path, the course should develop a contemporary perspective. The Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) should be aligned with the content of the course, the delivery and assessment methods.

Curriculum and Course Design — A quality online program will have a well thought-out approach to its curriculum and course design.

- ✓ Has clearly stated and attainable educational goals
- ✓ Is clear and coherent in its organization
- ✓ Utilizes quality instructional materials and appropriate technology that enable and enrich student learning
- ✓ Demonstrates rigorous course content

- ✓ Provides for high-degree of interaction between teacher, learners and among learners themselves
- ✓ Embeds critical thinking, problem solving, analysis, integration, and synthesis abilities in learning activities
- ✓ Meets requirements of appropriate state or national standards, including applicable end of course assessments
- ✓ Meets requirements of accessibility for individuals with disabilities
- ✓ Meets requirements of copyright and fair use
- ✓ Is designed to accommodate different learning styles
- ✓ Is designed with consideration for time and place limitations of students

Course Delivery

Course students must be provided with comprehensive and sound information about the course objectives, assignments and assessment methods. Any required prerequisite knowledge must be clearly stated. Students must be advised where to find academic and technical support at all times. The Educator is responsive to any complaints concerning the course in a timely manner.

Instruction — A quality online program takes a comprehensive and integrated approach to ensuring excellent online teaching for its students. This process begins with promising practices but is equally committed to continuous improvement and adaptation to student learning needs through professional development.

- ✓ Is supported by research and best practice medicine
- ✓ Is continually refined based on assessment of students' needs
- ✓ Is adaptable to best serve different student learning styles
- ✓ Is sensitive to the cultural differences of students
- ✓ Includes frequent teacher to student interaction and fosters frequent student-to-student interaction
- ✓ Is sensitive to time and place limitations of students
- ✓ Faculty hold the required state certifications
- ✓ Faculty are trained in and demonstrate competency in online instructional methodologies and learning technologies
- ✓ Includes a process to monitor that the work and assessments are completed by the students registered for the course

Quality Assurance

The Educator uses sound and effective assessment methods and can demonstrate reliably how the course's ILOs are achieved. The quality of the assessed students' work must reflect the ILOs.

It is anticipated that the Educator's major stakeholders (such as persons responsible at management level), and in particular the course students, are involved in the quality assurance process.

Assessment of Student Performance — A quality online learning program values student academic performance and takes a comprehensive, integrated approach to measuring student achievement. This includes use of multiple assessment measures and strategies that align closely to both program and learner objectives, with timely, relevant feedback to all stakeholders.

- ✓ Enables students to monitor their own learning progress.
- ✓ Enables educators to adapt their instruction to meet learner needs.
- ✓ Uses multiple methods to assess student performance.
- ✓ Assesses a variety of types of student performance.
- ✓ Uses formative assessments to inform instructional practice.
- ✓ Informs ongoing course design and revisions.
- ✓ Measures student attainment of the course's educational goals.
- ✓ Provides for timely and frequent feedback about student progress.

Support Standards

Support standards address the academic, administrative and technical services that are critical to meeting the needs of all students in the online program.

Support - A quality online program is boosted by active and engaged faculty providing timely academic and technical support.

- ✓ Provides and encourages participation.
- ✓ Provides regular academic assistance as needed.
- ✓ Provides timely, effective technical support.

Evaluation Standards

A culture of continual program improvement is critical in becoming a quality online program and maintaining that status. Evaluation efforts are utilized to both verify the program is meeting its intended purposes and identify where improvements can be made. The cycle is completed by taking this information and developing concrete plans for program improvement.

Program Evaluation — A quality online program recognizes the value of program evaluation. Program evaluation is both internal and external and informs all processes that effect teaching and learning. Internal evaluations often are more informal in nature and may provide immediate feedback on a targeted area of inquiry. External program evaluations typically look at the entire program from an objective perspective that will bring additional credibility to the results.

- ✓ Communicates evaluation results to program stakeholders.
- ✓ Conducts ongoing internal evaluations that include using clearly articulated measures to evaluate its learners.
- ✓ Conducts ongoing internal evaluations that include determining program success by measuring student achievement and satisfaction based on valid and reliable assessment techniques.

Program Improvement — A quality online program establishes a culture of continual program improvement. Improvement planning focuses on using program evaluations, research, and promising practices to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. It fosters continuous improvement across all aspects of the organization and ensures the program is focused on accomplishing its mission and vision.

- ✓ Uses data effectively to drive instructional and management decision-making.
- ✓ Student achievement.
- ✓ Internal and external evaluation.
- ✓ Current research in the relevant areas.
- ✓ Best practices medicine.
- ✓ Beta testing and peer review.
- ✓ Satisfaction surveys by students as appropriate.

Initial Certification Programs

Certified Education Coordinators (EC) can request a Blackboard shell course for use with any OEMS announced and approved initial certification program.

Announcing an Initial Certification Course

The following are the minimum requirements to offer an initial certification program on Blackboard. The EC shall:

1. Submit a signed [*Application to Develop and Offer Courses on Blackboard*](#) acknowledging the requirements in this document for the development of online courses on Blackboard, if not already submitted.
2. Comply with the [*Policies and Guidelines for Using Blackboard*](#)
3. have an OEMS approved initial certification program
4. make an [online request for a Blackboard course](#)
5. follow OEMS procedures for student enrollment
6. follow OEMS requirements as described in the [*Quick Guide: Required Gradebook Settings*](#)

Once the items above are completed, the Office will create a shell course and place it in the educators Blackboard account. The requestor will receive an e-mail confirmation from Jasper Williams once the course shell has been completed.

Course Development

All course development is the responsibility of the educator requesting the Blackboard shell course. The Virginia Office of EMS can only provide limited troubleshooting and guidance for course development. Full help documentation for our version of Blackboard can be found at:

<https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Ultra>

- Initial certification courses on Blackboard will not report any completion results to the Office of EMS.
- Initial certification courses cannot be used for the purposes of awarding continuing education hours.

Initial certification programs must meet the requirements set forth in this document, the [Virginia Emergency Medical Services Regulations 12 VAC 5-31](#) and the [Training Programs Administration Manual \(TPAM\)](#) as published by the Office of EMS Division of Accreditation, Certification & Education.

Continuing Education Programs

Certified Education Coordinators (EC) and endorsed ALS Coordinators can request a Blackboard shell course for use with any OEMS announced and approved continuing education program. The following requirements exist in order for this to take place. The EC/ALS-C must:

1. have an OEMS approved CE program – must be Custom CE Program
2. make an [online request for a Blackboard course](#)

As mentioned earlier in this document, continuing education programs offered on Blackboard are considered F3 Online Distributive Continuing Education by the National Registry and OEMS as defined by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE).

Continuing education programs placed on Blackboard will for the most part be considered asynchronous learning. Asynchronous education has been permitted in Virginia since 2008 so long as the educator/agency is making use of an LMS with approval from OEMS of each courses' content.

Announcing a Continuing Education Course

In Blackboard, the EC/ALS-C developing content awarding CAT 1 continuing education credit in Virginia shall:

1. Submit a signed [Application to Develop and Offer Courses on Blackboard](#) acknowledging the requirements in this document for the development of online courses on Blackboard, if not already submitted.
2. Comply with the [Policies and Guidelines for Using Blackboard](#)
3. make an [online request for a Blackboard course](#)
 - a. When completing this form, please note that you will be asked for a Blackboard start and end date. These dates of the official date you expect your program should “go live” in the Genius Course Catalog allowing students to enroll in the course.
 - b. Make sure you build enough time into your calendar to give yourself time to develop and finalize your course before the ‘go live’ date is reached.
 - c. If you need to change your “go live” date, please reach out to Jasper Williams (jasper.williams@vdh.virginia.gov) with this request.

Once the online course request has been made, OEMS will create a Blackboard shell course and notify the educator that they can access the course in their Blackboard account and begin designing the course.

Requirements for Asynchronous Continuing Education Courses

The EC/ALS-C developing content awarding CAT 1 continuing education credit in Virginia shall:

1. Ensure the F3 Online Distributive Continuing Education program meets the following minimum requirements:
 - a. Have a **Getting Started** content area that describes the course, course objectives, Blackboard computer requirements and a description of the CE credits being awarded.
 - b. Make use of Blackboard’s “**Release Conditions**” to ensure each *content item/area* is viewed/completed/finished/accomplished by the student before moving forward to the next *content item/area*.
 - c. Adhere to **Appendix A** of this document regarding [Continuing Education Hour Determination](#)

- d. Meet the following requirements at a minimum if videos are being used:
 - i. Be SCORM 1.2 compliant – This will require the use of additional software which is not included in the Blackboard package. For a list of SCORM 1.2 compliant authoring tools, please [click here](#).
 - ii. Not permit scrubbing of videos forward
 - iii. Backward scrubbing is permitted
 - iv. Pausing is permitted
- e. follow OEMS requirements as described in the [Quick Guide: Required Gradebook Settings](#)
- f. Have clearly stated and attainable educational goals
- g. Utilize quality instructional materials and appropriate technology that enable and enrich student learning
- h. Provide for high-degree of interaction between teacher, learners, parents, and among learners themselves
- i. Meet requirements of state and/or national standards, including applicable end of course assessments.
- j. Contain one 10 question quiz selected randomly from a pool of 20 questions per each academic hour of education.
 - i. OEMS has developed a [Quick Guide: Blackboard Ultra Test Question Creation for Import](#) to assist educators with formatting and creation of questions for the **Question Bank** tool in Blackboard.
- k. Meet requirements of copyright and fair use
- l. Be designed to accommodate different learning styles
- m. Make use of an end-of-course survey (optional)

Course Development

All course development is the responsibility of the educator requesting the Blackboard shell course. The Virginia Office of EMS can only provide limited troubleshooting and guidance for course development. Full help documentation for our version of Blackboard can be found at: <https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor/Ultra>

Online continuing education programs must meet the requirements set forth in this document, the [Virginia Emergency Medical Services Regulations 12 VAC 5-31](#) and the [Training Programs Administration Manual](#) (TPAM) as published by the Office of EMS Division of Accreditation, Certification & Education.

Course Ready Notification

When the educator has completed development work on a course, they should reach out to Jasper Williams (jasper.williams) via e-mail and notify him that the course is ready for final OEMS review.

Once the review is completed, Jasper will work with the educator to set a “go live” date for the course.

Appendix A

Continuing Education Hour Determination

Each presentation is comprised of finite number of written words that are consumed by the reader in a finite amount of time. On average, adults read between 150-250 words per minute. Thus, a one hour presentation will consist of roughly 10,000 words with appropriate charts, graphs and case presentations that support the written objectives. Current literature suggests that student interest and comprehension decreases dramatically after the first hour of any continuing education (CE) program.

Therefore, any applicant requesting more than one hour's worth of CE will be required to provide justification for such by matching course objectives with additional content. Further, applications that request two or more hours should be broken up into hour-long presentations as volumes of the subject matter presented, i.e. advanced airway I, advanced airway II, etc. The examples outlined below will be used to assist you in determining appropriate CE hour's designations for each web based continuing education application.

The Office knows that EMS web-based Continuing Education raining Programs have a varying degree of difficulty. A lesson on how to apply an arm splint is typically not as challenging as a presentation on 12 lead ECG interpretations. Therefore, it is necessary that we apply some uniform means of increasing CE hour determinations based on degree of difficulty of the presented material. CE hour's assignments are increased by 0.5 hours above the initial hour if the presented material can be reasonably considered complex and the objectives are supported by content.

EMS web-based Continuing Education Training Programs must include a post test that evaluates the student's understanding of the subject matter. Please add an additional ten (10) minutes for every ten (10) questions in the post test.

Example 1

An EMS web-based Continuing Education Training Programs contains a BLS presentation review of basic airway techniques including measuring and insertion of NPA and OPA and bag valve ventilation. The material is limited to simple terms and no new techniques are discussed. The applicant supplies a presentation length of 10,000 words.

- 10,000 words / 200 words per minute=50 minutes
- 10 question posttest that meets the objectives= 10 minutes

Total CE hours assignment for 10,000 word presentation=60 minutes

Example 2

An applicant submits a 16,000 word program on the Recognition and Treatment of Chest Trauma. The presentation is very detailed and includes illustrated x-rays, CT scans and arteriograms that depict chest anatomy and clinical representations of various trauma related chest abnormalities. Included in the discussion are detailed treatment guidelines and a comprehensive chart that aids in the diagnosis of various trauma related complications.

- 16,000 words / 200 words per minute=96 minutes
- Assignment based on degree of difficulty=30 minutes
- 20 question posttest that meets the objectives= 20 minutes

Total CE hours assignment for 16,000 word presentation=146 minutes

For this program the Office can comfortably assign 2.5 hours (150 minutes) of CE hour time.

Continuing Education Hour Determination Chart								
Length of Presentation	Minutes Assigned	Post Test	Total	Hours	Added Degree of Difficulty (DOD)	Total Hours	Post Test	Total with 20 Question Post Test and DOD
10,000 words	50	10	60	1.00	30	1.50	20	1
11,000 words	55	10	65	1.08	30	1.58	20	1
12,000 words	60	10	70	1.16	30	1.66	20	1
13,000 words	65	10	75	1.25	30	1.75	20	2
14,000 words	70	10	80	1.30	30	1.83	20	2
15,000 words	75	10	85	1.40	30	1.91	20	2
16,000 words	80	10	90	1.50	30	2.00	20	2
17,000 words	85	10	95	1.58	30	2.08	20	2
18,000 words	90	10	100	1.60	30	2.16	20	2
19,000 words	95	10	105	1.75	30	2.25	20	2
20,000 words	100	10	110	1.83	30	2.33	20	2
21,000 words	105	10	115	1.91	30	2.41	20	2
22,000 words	110	10	120	2.00	30	2.50	20	2
23,000 words	115	10	125	2.08	30	2.58	20	2
24,000 words	120	10	130	2.16	30	2.66	20	2
25,000 words	125	10	135	2.25	30	2.75	20	3
26,000 words	130	10	140	2.33	30	2.83	20	3
27,000 words	135	10	145	2.41	30	2.91	20	3
28,000 words	140	10	150	2.50	30	3.00	20	3

Appendix B

Asynchronous Course Plan Rubric