St. John Vianney College Seminary

Distance Education Faculty Handbook
2019-2022

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1. Institutional Mission

The fundamental purpose of St. John Vianney College Seminary is to provide undergraduate and graduate education and formation for those students whose stated objective is to discern a call to serve the Catholic Church as priests. The institution assumes, as its specific responsibility, the academic, spiritual, pastoral, and human formation of college seminarians within a bilingual (English-Spanish) and multicultural setting. The college seminary is also committed to provide academic opportunities, both on-campus and online, for laity, and others who may be enriched by its services.

2. Online Instruction Learning Management System (LMS)

All Online instruction is conducted through Canvas, the institution LMS.

3. Definition of an Online Course

St. John Vianney College Seminary's online courses are asynchronous, which means that students and instructors are NOT in the same physical setting during the instructional time. In an online course fully conducted online, the tests, quizzes, and learning activities occur online. Some courses, if possible and at the discretion of the instructor, may require face-to-face sessions. In those instances, the face-to-face requirements will be listed in the course syllabus. Faculty must have Internet access, understand and be able to use email and the web, create and save documents in specific file formats, and upload files as an attachment.

4. Course Approval Process

Proposals for new courses must follow the following process:

- Submit course proposal to the Chair of the Department.
- Chair will bring the proposal to the Philosophy Department faculty for consideration.
- If the proposal is approved, the Chair will communicate the decision of the philosophy department to the instructor proposing the course and to the Academic Dean for inclusion in the schedule.

5. Authority and Responsibilities of Online Faculty

The goal of Distance Education is to provide students the opportunity to earn college credit through alternative, technology-based methods of instruction and learning. As an instructor in online courses, the role of the faculty is to provide these students with the same high- quality instruction they would receive in the physical classroom. Online instructors have authority over the quality of instruction in distance education. To ensure the quality of online instruction, the faculty is expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Instructors should provide clear guidelines for interaction with students in their course syllabus.
- Syllabi must be available to students on the first day of classes.
- Instructors should establish policies describing the types of communication that should take place over different channels.
- Instructors need to provide feedback and describe a feedback plan in their course syllabus that states when the instructor will give feedback to the students for each type of assignment/test and what type of feedback can be expected.
- Faculty members and division chairs will ensure the curriculum offered in online courses is consistent and as rigorous as the curriculum offered in face-to-face courses.
- Grading and necessary feedback will be completed within 2 weeks of the student's submission.
- Faculty members will establish contact with students at the beginning of the semester and maintain regular communication throughout the term. Communication will employ any suitable means including discussion boards, private e-mail, individualized chat sessions (including online "office hours"), telephone, face-to-face communication, etc.
- Faculty members will be available to interact with students and will respond to student's voice mail or email within 2 working days.
- Deadlines and expected activities will be clearly stated at the beginning of the term.
- It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure all copyright provisions are met and permissions have been obtained as appropriate.
- Instructors must maintain for five years a complete and accurate record of grades students earned (including assignments, tests, papers, and final grades) in each course, and submission of these to the Academic Dean if requested.

6. Requirements in Conducting an Online Course

- Before the semester begins, all class syllabi must be posted in the institution's LMS (Canvas) prior to the first day of class. Students have access to Canvas beginning at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on the first day of class.
- During the first week of classes, the instructor must establish contact with all registered students to communicate to ensure that they are registered and active in the course. Regular communication must be maintained during the semester.
- All communication with the students must go through the institution's LMS. Communication will employ all suitable means including discussion boards, e-mail, individualized chat sessions, (including online "office hours"), telephone, face-to-face communication, etc.
- Student's e-mails and voice mail messages must be answered within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

- Once the grade rosters open at the end of the semester, faculty must enter the grades before noon of the deadline.
- If a course needs to be extended due to Incompletes, then the faculty member needs to contact the Online Program Coordinator for directions.

7. Online Attendance Policy

In a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. A school must demonstrate that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion or initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a course-related question. – *FSA Handbook 2017-18, Volume 5, p. 61.*

In order to comply with this federal requirement, St. John Vianney College Seminary offers the following process for documenting attendance when students are enrolled in distance education courses:

- Documentation that a student has logged into an online course is not sufficient to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. To show academic attendance, the student must complete some type of "academically related" activity in the course, such as participation in online group discussions, examinations, contacts with instructor, submission of course assignments.
- If the instructor determines a student has not logged in and participated in an academically related activity as described above by the third week of classes, the student has not attended the class, the student will be administratively dropped by Registrar (no form completion required).

8. Best Practices for Online Instruction

- **Student-Faculty contact.** Instructors should provide clear guidelines for interaction with students in their course syllabus. Instructors should establish policies describing the types of communication that should take place over different channels.
- **Cooperation among Students.** Well-designed discussion assignments facilitate meaningful cooperation among students.
- **Feedback.** Students should receive prompt feedback on the assignments and discussions.
- **Deadlines.** Regularly distributed deadlines encourage students to spend time on tasks and help students with busy schedules avoid procrastination
- **Expectations.** Communicating high expectations for student performance is essential. Examples of high expectations include challenging assignments, regular participation in group discussions, submission of well-written assignments on time.

9. Canvas Training

The Online Education Coordinator will train all faculty in the use of Canvas and will assist them in set in up their courses.

10.   Library Services

As a member of a library Catholic Consortium with the library of St. Thomas University since 1996, St. John Vianney College Seminary students and faculty have access through the Web to the extensive St. Thomas's print and electronic resources (e-book and periodical collections), as well as to the many online databases available to the students of both institutions. As a member of the South East Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN), SJVCS can make available, through interlibrary loans, the extensive resources of this network.

Destiny, SJVCS' web-based catalog of the Maytag Memorial Library's book and reference collection, as well as the web-accessed library collection catalog of ST. Thomas University is accessible to all students enrolled at SJVCS.

Distance Learning students can use all of the library's resources, including the print book collection of both libraries, which they can check out by submitting a request to the SJVCS Library via e-mail. Within forty-eight hours of the request, the Library will respond to the student and send via mail the requested book(s).

11.   Faculty Evaluation

See *Faculty Handbook*, 4.3.

12.   Program Assessment

Evaluation of student achievement is conducted via a *Comprehensive Examination Rubric* and a *Master's Thesis Rubric*. A student satisfaction survey, *Online Students Survey*, is administered to determine student satisfaction.