Guidelines for Exception to Policy on Distance Education Courses

Section IV of the Policy on Distance Education Courses allows an instructor to request an exception to the Policy to teach a course online without the R-course designation. The following guidelines provide the criteria and procedures for an instructor to request an exception to teach online. Before pursuing an exception, an instructor , in consultation with their Department Chair, is encouraged to explore leave options with the Director of Academic Policy and Family Programs in Academic Personnel Services.

Exception requests for online teaching may be submitted by academic units to Senate Associate Director Ashley Hill (awelch@ucsd.edu) for review by Undergraduate Council (UGC) or Graduate Council (GC). Regardless of teaching modality, the ordinary policies regarding work location apply, including PPM 230-10 II.M, APM 700-0, APM 025.8.a and APM 671.8.a. Requests for exceptions to these policies should be submitted to the Executive Vice Chancellor through Academic Personnel Services.

1. Exception for Online Teaching due to a Documented Disability
   A course may be taught as a distance education course without an R-course designation due to an instructor's documented disability, if approved by the Undergraduate Council (for undergraduate courses) or Graduate Council (for graduate courses). The following two steps must be completed for UGC or GC to consider the exception:

   a) The instructor submitted a request for a workplace accommodation to Disability Counseling and Consulting (DCC), and provided evidence of a documented disability;
   b) The Department Chair (or cognizant academic unit head) and School Dean (or equivalent) have both determined that offering the course online does not fundamentally alter the academic goals of the course and provided a justification to UGC or GC explaining why online instruction is academically appropriate for the course.

   The request to UGC or GC should include evidence that the instructor initiated the process with DCC and a letter from the Department Chair, with endorsement from the School Dean, stating the course(s) requested for online teaching and addressing why online instruction is academically appropriate for the course(s) assigned to the instructor. As part of their review, departments are asked to evaluate the instructor's commitment to the intellectual rigor of the course and what measures will be put in place to safeguard the academic integrity of the course, including plans for high stakes assessments. Following UGC or GC review, the academic head or unit will receive a notification from the Academic Senate of the outcome and may proceed to complete the interactive process with DCC.

2. Exception for Online Teaching due to Extenuating Circumstances other than a Documented Disability
   A course may be taught as a distance education course without an R-course designation due to extenuating circumstances that are not based on an instructor's documented disability, if approved by the Undergraduate Council (for undergraduate courses) or Graduate Council (for graduate courses). The following conditions must be met for UGC or GC to consider the exception:
   a) The instructor has requested to teach the course online when their situation would otherwise allow them to be eligible for a leave or accommodation based on University policy;
   b) Department Chair and School Deans have confirmed that a leave or accommodation is within policy for the specific faculty situation, thereby allowing consideration of online instruction as an alternative. EPC's purview is limited to course modality. The administration can provide guidance related to other policies applicable to academic appointees based on their request/need. Faculty, chairs and deans may consult with departmental or school AP staff, may refer to the APS website

(https://aps.ucsd.edu/faculty-resources/leaves/index.html) or may reach out to Academic Personnel Services regarding leave and/or accommodation options;

c) The Department Chair and School Dean have determined that online instruction does not fundamentally alter the academic goals of the course and a justification is provided explaining why online instruction is academically appropriate for the course.

The request to UGC or GC should include a letter from the Department, endorsed by the Dean, that addresses the points raised above. As part of their review, departments are asked to evaluate the instructor's commitment to the intellectual rigor of the course and what measures will be put in place to safeguard the academic integrity of the course, including plans for high stakes assessments.