

Pennco Tech Bristol Campus

School Policy for Utilization of Online Learning Tools in a Program Not Approved for Distance Education

SCOPE: ACCSC in an Alert dated December 1, 2020 stated; The allowance for schools to utilize online, or other, learning tools as a supplement in a program not approved for distance education is not new; however, given circumstances related to COVID-19 the Commission felt it useful to provide guidelines in these regards. Schools may establish policies that allow students who are subject to circumstances that limit their ability to attend in-person coursework to “attend” classes for a limited period using online learning supplemental resources.

There are several other scenarios and circumstances that could qualify for such accommodations and which would not require distance education approval from ACCSC. The Commission does not require notification or approval of these types of learning accommodations and expects that in making such accommodations: The school establishes appropriate policies and practices conforming to the spirit and intent of these guidelines; Such practices are limited in duration, application, and in scope to only those students whose circumstances qualify; and Such practices are not used to replace entirely the approved delivery method of a program.

Conflicting Guidance: The Commission’s guidance in the above areas may be different from and may be more or less stringent than guidance provided by other regulatory agencies such as state approving agencies or the U.S. Department of Education. Pursuant to ACCSC’s Rules of Process and Procedures, in all instances the more stringent requirement applies and schools should make a concerted effort to know and understand the guidance being given across all applicable governing regulatory agencies.

Pennco Tech’s School Policy:

Pennco Tech in no way sees the current method of delivery of our curriculum to our students, of in-person classes, changing to any form of distance education. All distance education offered by the school will ONLY be used when needed for inclement weather and for pandemic reasons as mandated by the Governor, the State Department of Education, or in the best interest of separating our students and staff to a greater degree than reduced class size or hybrid models can provide.

The circumstances that would warrant such an accommodation for students:

Pennco Tech will ONLY use on-line training for your lecture material in issues of inclement weather and/or pandemic (COVID19) issues, both on a Campus wide level and an individual student level.

The limits of the accommodation regarding time and qualifying course types;

The length of time we may need to use a distance education format is driven by the guidance we receive from an outside agency such as the Governor and/or the State Department of Education.

All Programs/Courses will be allowed to use distance education as needed under this Policy.

All distance education offered by the school, when needed to prevent the spread of COVID19 to students and staff, are from our in-person curriculum and only the lecture/didactic content of the Program/Course will be offered on-line.

The resources the student would need in order to take advantage of the accommodation – for example access to a computer, webcam, and the internet or the ability to receive and access recorded classroom lectures;

Pennco Tech uses Microsoft TEAMS as its delivery system for on-line classes when used. If you do not own a computer with a camera and microphone, the Education Department will offer you the opportunity to sign out a school owned laptop and your Instructor will train your class on how to use Microsoft TEAMS for those times it may be needed as discussed above. We only utilize Microsoft Teams and never use recorded classroom lectures.

Students have access to the Pennco Tech Online Learning Guide located on the student portal.

All other school services to students will be offered in-person on-campus and never by way of on-line Distance Educational services.

Any requirements for access to learning materials – for example, the student’s ability to use the school’s learning resource system remotely as required to complete assignments;

ALL programs offered will have a blended format, all facilities, equipment, technology, and other resources on Campus will be fully available to the students.

For those situations where we have restrictions that limit on campus usage, all labs and other resources will be made available to the students once those restrictions are removed.

Any requirements and allowances for make-up work in cases where accommodations could not be made – for example, requirements to attend a hands-on lab make-up section outside of normal course schedules;

The Director of Education will work with students, both as a class or on an individual basis, to ensure they have the opportunity to complete any and all hands-on labs missed during periods of on-line learning.

Date: December 30, 2020

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Location of Document: SD computer