Module 7: Sample Policy and Procedure Manual

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**Scenario to set the stage**

The scenario is a 100% Online International High School (a private college prep school) accredited and NCAA approved, that provides online classes for Academic Excellence for Scholars, Athletes and Artists in the USA. The educational institution’s goal is to help students attain a high level of academic achievement while allowing them the flexibility and time to train, practice and compete full time in their chosen fields. The students’ goal is to be able to obtain athletic/arts/honors scholarships and to attend the best colleges in the nation. The school is located in an urban area and accepts all gifted and talented students regardless of socio economical background. All courses are delivered online. Faculty are specialists in their academic fields offering honors classes to small groups of students via synchronous and asynchronous communication tools.

I am the Director of Distance Education for their new E-Learning World Languages Program (Spanish Language). I am in charge of all matters related to Instructional Design, Policy and Procedures as well as Formative and Summative Evaluation Efforts.

Below is the Policy and Procedure Manual related to Distance Education based on the previous scenario.

**Policy and Procedure Manual**

This Policy and Procedure Manual aims to describe the ideal procedures that must be followed in order to have a successful Distance Education Program Online for Foreign Language Instruction. It is divided into the four following subsystems: Regulatory, Course, Student and Logistical Subsystems. Additionally in includes policies for accessibility for Students with Disabilities and Outreach to Underserved and Global populations.

**Regulatory Systems**

1. The Long Distance Education Director will supervise the overall management of the online Learning Management System with support from the computer programing experts in order to insure high quality service is provided to all stockholders (students, teachers, staff, parents, administration and universities giving scholarships after graduation).
2. All courses must have formative and summative assessment conducted by a team of instructional designers who will consider the opinions of the Online Education Program Stockholders (parents, students, teachers, instructional designers, administration, staff and universities giving scholarships after graduation) to insure appropriate representation of all people using the system.
3. Marketing the programs to potential students will be design to attract talented students and their families who will benefit the most from a flexible online education program to prepare before college.
4. Program accreditation and the entire financial aspect of the program will be oversight by the Dean of Students and staff in Human Resources to insure the program is within state and national quality standards.

**Course Subsystem**

1. Instructional Development and Digital Media Production Staff will support faculty to create attractive and interesting web-based courses through Canvas Learning Management System.
2. Since the online courses could potentially have global international students it will be necessary to have technical support 24hrs 7 days per week in English Language to help faculty and students with technical support questions to insure optimal technical operation and student success in the program.
3. Licensing and maintenance of Web 2.0 tools for students and faculty use such as blogging and wiki development will also be a task to be taken care of by the Instructional Development Team.
4. A representative from Student Disability Services must be available online during virtual office hours to help students with Letters of Special Accommodations and those who have Doctors Letters stating their special needs. This SDS representative will be in charge of receiving such letters, having a contract signed between the teacher and the student or student’s guardian in order to insure accessibility for all students according to USA accessibility law. Special accommodations will be made available depending on each particular case.

**Student Subsystem**

1. Student subsystems include all student support services available and easily accessible to a distant learner online via email and virtual office hours on skype. Our program includes quality student support services in the following areas: Student Career Counseling, Student Disability Services, Mental Health Wellness Services, Technical Support, College Application Support Services, Library and Research Services, Scholarships Application Support Services, Financial Aid Support Services and Student Business Services, Student Records/Transcripts Services, Academic Advising Services. All this services online are offered to guarantee student success until graduation as well as future student enrollments in our online platforms.
2. All these student services must be integrated into the online learning system and be made available to all online students upon registration. Student services must provide personalized responses rather than computer-generated responses or emails in order to guarantee students’ success. Students must be able to receive a response within 24hrs or less. There will be a chat tool available where students can request and receive support during office hours (8-5pm) and be able to request virtual office hours by appointment if they can’t be available during regular office hours.
3. It will be necessary to have a phone number or a person to contact via chat or virtual office hours to help talented and gifted students from underserved communities so that they can also be successful in their online programs. For these students it will be important to follow up closely to make sure they have the software (programs, apps, etc), hardware (laptops, ipads, camaras, microphones) and internet connection they need to be successful.

**Logistical Subsystem**

1. Hiring of Human Resources to make sure all student services, technical support, faculty and instructional designers are able to complete their tasks will be in charge of the Dean of the school.
2. The Dean of the school will also be in charge of hiring successful teachers/faculty who have the following characteristics: a) Serious lifelong learners, b) Those who enjoy up-front conceptual work, c) Those who have skills as facilitators, d) Teachers who make expectations explicit, e) Teachers who provide detailed developmental feedback, f) Teachers willing to give feedback at frequent intervals.
3. A Teachers Development Office will also be available to teachers engaged in distance education to help them with all the logistics and technological training they will need to be successful facilitators of learning online.
4. The Teachers Development Office will include workshops on pedagogical strategies to promote higher-order learning, critical thinking and online discussion management tools and assessments as well as effective use of web 2.0 technologies, course evaluation and effective virtual office hours.