

CTCLINK COURSE MODALITY

Data Governance Committee Proposal, October 2023

Background & Introduction

Washington's statewide system of 34 community and technical colleges is at its best when it leverages its collective strength. Whether pooling resources, knowledge, or data, our strength as a system exceeds that of any single institution. As we consider shared funding, policies, priorities, regulations, and accreditation, it is necessary to compare relevant and consistent data across colleges.

Methods for coding course modalities have varied widely over the last two decades.

This proposal seeks to define a system of coding to reduce inconsistencies by further clarifying how courses should be coded per modality. Consistent data will result in reliable and statistically valid findings and reports.

Why now?

The onset of COVID-19 restrictions drove systemwide discussions about course modality and how colleges could more accurately communicate course modality (i.e., modes of course delivery) to students as they search for classes. The terms "asynchronous" and "synchronous" became common when describing course modality.

When in-person COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, it was evident how much our educational delivery methods had expanded and students are left struggling to decipher when, where, and how a class is taught and the in-person versus online requirements. This proposal aims to clarify course modality in ctcLink for students, staff, and faculty.

Instruction Modes

The Instruction Mode data element in ctcLink is one factor of course modality. Instruction Modes were configured in ctcLink primarily based on the Legacy Distance Education codes. The last revision to Distance Education coding was implemented in 2010. Now, 13 years later, there is a strong business need to update the categories of distance education to reflect current course modality.

The systemwide Data Governance Committee formed a Course Modality Subcommittee in January 2023, meeting monthly and then weekly to identify the primary uses of Instruction Modes:

- Communicate to the student what they can expect if they register for the class
- Class Search
- Local, state, and federal reporting, such as IPEDS
- Charging class fees

The subcommittee compiled a list of usages from each college for each of the currently active Instruction Modes available in ctcLink and used this information to guide the development of this proposal.

Data Governance Guiding Principles

- Keep it simple. Simplicity makes data easier to track, validate and to find coding issues.
- Consider the effects of the decision to modify criteria from multiple perspectives including the student, college, district, SBCTC, and national viewpoints.
- Understand the purpose. Is the data used to report externally, for state-level analysis, college-level analysis, or funding decisions? Is it used nationally?
- Implementation timeline. Consider how the timing of change impacts how the data is used and viewed. Implement changes beginning in summer quarter whenever possible.
- Consider the effects of the change on trend analysis and historical reporting.
- All recommendations and decisions should be fully documented to include the intent, purpose, definition, and impact. They should also be accompanied by a diagnostic evaluation of why there are issues with the current definition, how the data were represented under that definition, and how the data would look under the new definition.

Subcommittee General Considerations

During the development of this proposal, much consideration was given to the impact any changes may have on students, reporting, or the charging of class fees.

The subcommittee aimed to be flexible in the Instruction Modes definitions to minimize the impact of change. For example, the subcommittee did not want to be prescriptive about how a college charges fees (i.e., at the class level or through term fees).

See the subcommittee member list in [Appendix A](#).

Class Financial Aid Eligibility

The subcommittee considered the impact of changing Instruction Modes on Financial Aid eligibility. The initial goal was to identify which Instruction Modes were not financial aid eligible. However, Instruction Modes are not the only factor of financial aid eligibility; other class and program attributes factor into this eligibility and it was determined not to provide guidance in this area within this document or coding matrix.

Reporting Instruction Modes

When reporting data using Instruction Mode during the implementation year and beyond, group the information as represented by the “Reportable As” indicator in the [Instruction Mode Coding Matrix](#) for consistent reporting across all colleges.

Washington Online (WAOL)

Currently, WAOL is an active Instruction Mode category. WAOL is a Legacy-based system and is no longer the desired description for system-shared classes. The use of this Instruction Mode currently requires manual processing to track and associate the instructed and enrolled class sections of shared classes.

It is proposed:

- The term “Washington Online” be replaced by the term “System Shared Classes.”
- These classes are tracked through the use of Course Attributes and removed from Instruction Mode.

The following proposal provides details of a new configuration and query to help automate the process:

- Configure a new global Course Attribute for System Shared Classes (SSHR).
- Deactivate the WAOL Instruction Mode code WA.
- Develop a query for college and SBCTC staff to identify the system shared classes.
- Colleges will use the Class Section field to designate the system shared course contract ID.

Course Modality Terms Glossary

Course Modality

- Represents the where, when, and how the class is delivered.
- From a data perspective, course modality is a combination of:
 - Instruction Mode (for example: Online or In-Person)
 - Class Location
 - Facility ID
 - Meeting patterns
 - Class start and end dates
 - Class Notes (displayed to student during class search)
- Students use these fields to filter the class offerings, except for class notes. The system prevents the student from registering for overlapping classes which creates a challenge when instructors are unable to accurately depict what is happening in the classroom. Example: If a class is built with a specific meeting pattern, but is actually delivered in a flexible mode, this could conflict with other class offerings in which the student would like to enroll.

Distance Education

- Legacy data element (SBCTC-MISC-1 in SMS and DIST_ED in the Data Warehouse).

Instruction Mode

- A data element in ctcLink Campus Solutions (INSTRUCTION_MODE).
- Required for each class and designates if the class is taught fully or partially at a distance.
- Used for federal reporting such as IPEDS and NCS.
- Students use this field to search for classes that meet their scheduling needs.

Synchronous Instruction (scheduled)

- Instructor-facilitated learning which happens in real-time with instructors and students. Students are expected to gather at a specified day and time, in a virtual or physical space, with the instructor based on a predictable and scheduled basis.

Asynchronous Instruction (unscheduled)

- Instructor-facilitated learning with no specified meeting times and days. Students complete assignments, group projects, quizzes, discussions, and other activities following set deadlines. The instructor provides regular, substantive interaction.
 - Some asynchronous classes require students to come to campus (or some other pre-determined location) for proctored tests or other in-person activities.

HyFlex

- HyFlex, short for Hybrid-Flexible, is a course design method and teaching approach designed to better accommodate student needs by combining online and classroom-based components.
- HyFlex describes a single class offered in multiple instruction modes and the student determines which instruction mode meets their needs. They may change instruction modes during the quarter.
- Students may take the class asynchronously online, synchronously in person, or synchronously virtually (Zoom).
- Often up to the instructor to decide which modes are available.
- This proposal uses the term “Flexible” as a synonym for “HyFlex.”

Proposed Instruction Mode Coding Schema

The Data Governance Committee proposes the following configuration changes of the INSTRUCTION-MODE data element in PeopleSoft Campus Solutions. *It is not requested nor recommended to change Instruction Modes on any previously offered or current quarter classes.*

Instruction Mode	Definition (for staff, not viewable to students)	Instruction Mode Code	Reportable As
Online Scheduled	<p>An online class where instruction takes place synchronously (virtual meetings held at specific days and times noted in the class schedule) using internet/web-based tools.</p> <p>The class may include activities held asynchronously (without a set time to attend).</p> <p>Remote proctored exams are an allowable activity for this instruction mode.</p>	OS	Online
Online Scheduled w/In-Person	<p>An online class where instruction takes place synchronously (virtual meetings held at specific days and times noted in the class schedule) using internet/web-based tools.</p> <p>In-person activities such as assessment, exam, and/or orientation are required for class completion.</p> <p>The number of in-person activities must not be greater than the number of credits enrolled, e.g., a five-credit class is limited to five in-person activities. If the number of in-person activities exceeds the number of credits enrolled, the class should use the Hybrid Instruction Mode.</p> <p>The expectation of in-person activities must be included in the class notes and the meeting pattern added to the schedule, when known.</p>	OW	Online
Online Asynchronous	<p>A class in which all required instruction occurs online asynchronously (without a set time to attend but within a specified time frame) using web-based tools.</p> <p>There are no required real-time (synchronous) activities; however, the instructor may choose to offer optional synchronous sessions for office hours and other class meetings where attendance is not required.</p> <p>Remote proctored exams are an allowable activity for this classification.</p>	OA	Online

Instruction Mode	Definition (for staff, not viewable to students)	Instruction Mode Code	Reportable As
Online Asynchronous w/In-Pers	<p>A class in which all required instruction occurs online asynchronously (without a set time to attend but within a specified time frame) using web-based tools.</p> <p>Scheduled in-person activities (assessment, exam and/or orientation) are required for class completion.</p> <p>The number of in-person activities must not be greater than the number of credits enrolled (e.g., a five-credit class is limited to five in-person activities). If the number of in-person activities exceeds the number of credits enrolled, the class should use the Hybrid Instruction Mode.</p> <p>The expectation of in-person activities must be included in the class notes.</p>	OB	Online
In-Person	<p>A face-to-face class with scheduled meeting times which does not require the use of web-based tools.</p>	P	In-Person
In-Person (Web Enhanced)	<p>A face-to-face class with scheduled meeting times which requires the use of web-based tools.</p>	WE	In-Person
Hybrid	<p>A class that displaces some, but not all face-to-face instruction time with web-based tools.</p> <p>On-site or remotely-proctored exams are allowed for this classification.</p>	HY	Hybrid
Flexible	<p>A class in which the student can choose to attend face-to-face or take the class using a mix of online scheduled or online asynchronous. Students may switch between modes throughout the term.</p> <p>The class must include at least one of the following instruction mode combinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person and Online Asynchronous • In-Person and Online Scheduled • In-Person, Online Scheduled, and Online Asynchronous <p>The exact mix of modes <u>must</u> be included in the class notes.</p>	FL	Flexible
Self-Paced	<p>Conducted asynchronously online. Students use web-based tools to follow a syllabus, list of required readings, and instructions on how to complete lessons. Instructors grade assignments and give feedback online.</p> <p>Uses same FTE calculations as all other instruction modes.</p> <p>This instruction mode is not financial aid eligible and not allowable for state funded FTE.</p>	OZ	Online

Individualized Instruction	<p>One-to-one instruction in which a student meets individually with an instructor according to a mutually agreed upon schedule and plan.</p> <p>This instruction mode may include internships, personalized tutoring, or specialized content classes where students collaborate with faculty or staff to develop individualized learning agreements and/or learning outcomes.</p> <p>May also include practicums, co-ops, or service-learning activities.</p>	IS	Individualized Instruction
Other	A class that uses other modes of delivery that do not fit within the listed instruction mode categories.	Z	Other

Summary of Proposed Changes

Current Instruction Mode	Proposed Change
Correspondence	Retire
Hybrid	No Change
Independent Studies	Rename to Individualized Instruction
Interactive Television	Retire
Online	Split into four categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Online Asynchronous 2. Online Asynchronous w/In-Person Activities 3. Online Scheduled 4. Online Scheduled w/In-Person Activities
Optional - F2F or OL	Rename to Flexible
Other	No Change
In Person	No Change
Tele-course	Retire
Tele-class	Retire
Washington Online	Retire and replace with "System Shared Classes." It is also proposed these classes be tracked through the use of Course Attributes and removed from Instruction Mode.
Self-Paced	New
Web-Enhanced	Change description to "In-Person (Web Enhanced)"

Proposed Implementation Timeline

After receiving initial feedback, the DGC discussed postponing the implementation year to 2025-2026; however, such a delay would negatively impact students. This implementation timeline is admittedly aggressive, but by implementing this coding schema sooner, rather than later, the DGC affirms its commitment to keeping students in the forefront.

- The remainder of the 2023-2024 academic year will be considered the development year
 - October 2023: DGC will gather system feedback by Oct. 20th; analyze the feedback and finalize the proposal.
 - November 2023: Proposal presented to the ctcLink Working Group (unless feedback indicates a significant issue that must first be resolved)
 - December 2023: Finalize ctcLink configuration and supporting queries and update QRG's
 - Beginning January, 2024: Colleges will revise class instruction modes to align with new coding practice and should be completed in time to align with the 2024-2025 Academic Year class schedule publication date
- 2024-2025 Academic Year: Implementation Year
 - The new Instruction Mode coding schema will be in place and available for reporting.

How to Provide Feedback

The system's Data Governance Committee (DGC) Data Governors ask that each commission and council review the proposal and provide feedback. Please submit feedback to your council or commission's DGC representative by **October 20th, 2023**. See [Data Governance Membership List](#).

Colleges may also solicit feedback from their students during this time related to the description of Instruction Modes (what a student sees when searching for classes), if desired.

The Data Governors will review feedback and make changes to this proposal where applicable before voting for approval.

APPENDIX A

Course Modality Subcommittee Members

Name	College/Organization	Representing
Carmen McKenzie	SBCTC	SBCTC and DGC
Michael A. Brown	SBCTC	eLearning/Open Education
Eva Smith	Edmonds College	ITC
Teya Viola	Cascadia College	Course and Class building/maintenance
Jenifer Aydelotte	Shoreline Community College	Course and Class building/maintenance
Iulia Zavodov	Bellevue College	Curriculum Management
Steven Danver	Columbia Basin College	Baccalaureate Leadership Council
Lynn Clements	Edmonds College	Instruction/Schedule Development/Enrollment Requirements/25Live
Hannah Lovett	Everett Community College	eLearning
Aimee Pope	Wenatchee Valley College	CS - Instruction, Curriculum, Class Scheduling/Coding
Laura A Wooster	Walla Walla Community College	Curriculum and scheduling (class-building)
Kevin Bowersox-Johnson	Seattle Colleges	eLearning - District Level
Rose Madison	Everett Community College	Local Security Admin
Kathy Chatfield	Clark College	eLearning and Instructional Design, Online Degrees
Anne White	Pierce College	Admissions and Registration Council (ARC)
Sukirti Ranade	Bellevue College	eLearning Department
Mark Baumann	Seattle Colleges District	Campus Solutions
Gwen Bloomsburg	Walla Walla Community College	Center for Integrated Learning (including eLearning)
Bethany Jennings-Kelly	Peninsula College	Class scheduling in ctcLink
Sarah Griffith	Lower Columbia College	eLearning
Marc Lentini	Highline College	eLearning/educational technology
Sheila Northrop	Tacoma Community College	Instructional Design
Dawn Hawley	Bellingham Technical College	eLearning/Library/Tutoring
Kyra Sims	Community Colleges of Spokane	Institutional Research
Sue Riddle	Olympic College	eLearning
Emily Coates	Highline College	Institutional Research
Kyla Garcia	Community College of Spokane	Institutional Research

Name	College/Organization	Representing
Betsy Zahrt Geib	Bellevue College	eLearning/Instructional Designers/Academic Affairs
Jeremy Winn	Grays Harbor College	eLearning
Heidi Ypma	Bellingham Technical College	Instruction Commission
Lia Homeister	Renton Technical College	Research and Planning Council
Liz Mueth	Edmonds College	Curriculum and Scheduling