

Academic Operating Procedure 1

Standard Days and Times for Online Synchronous Courses (Section 650)



Effective Date:	Spring 2027
Responsible Executive:	Provost, Director of Digital Education
Applicability:	09/14/2026
Review Cycle:	09/14/ 2029 (Every three (3) years)

I. Philosophy and Purpose

Texas A&M University–Kingsville (TAMUK) is committed to ensuring that all distance learning courses are delivered with academic rigor, instructional quality, and access consistent with state and regional accreditation standards. As the University continues to expand innovative instructional delivery methods, **Online Synchronous (Section 650)** courses provide students with the flexibility of online learning while maintaining the benefits of scheduled, real-time interaction with faculty.

This Academic Operating Procedure establishes institutional standards for scheduling and delivering Online Synchronous (**Section 650**) courses. By defining standard meeting days and times, the University promotes consistency in course scheduling, enhances transparency during registration, minimizes scheduling conflicts, and supports student success through clear expectations for participation and engagement.

This procedure aligns with the University's commitment to quality distance education and supports compliance with applicable Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and institutional policies governing online instruction

II. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty assigned as Instructor of Record for:

- Online Courses (650)

All distance education courses must be delivered using institutionally supported technologies:

- Blackboard (LMS of record)
- Zoom (synchronous delivery platform)

Use of approved systems ensures compliance with institutional data governance, accessibility standards, and student authentication requirements consistent with SACSCOC and federal regulations.

This Academic Operating Procedure applies to all Texas A&M University–Kingsville faculty, academic departments, colleges, and administrative units responsible for scheduling, delivering, and overseeing **Online Synchronous (Section 650)** courses.

This procedure governs courses in which instruction is delivered entirely online, with required live, scheduled class meetings conducted using institutionally approved technologies. It establishes standard meeting patterns, scheduling expectations, and instructional requirements to ensure consistency across the institution, support student scheduling, and maintain compliance with accreditation, state, and federal distance education standards.

All Online Synchronous (Section 650) courses must:

- Follow the university's approved standard days and times.
- Display scheduled meeting days and times in Banner (Blue & Gold) and the official class schedule.
- Utilize Blackboard as the University's official Learning Management System (LMS).
- Use the University's approved web conferencing platform (Zoom) for synchronous instruction.
- Comply with applicable Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and institutional policies governing online instruction.

This procedure does not apply to fully asynchronous online courses (Section 600), hybrid courses (Section 900), or traditional face-to-face instructional modalities, **except where specifically referenced by university policy.**

III. Definition

An **Online Synchronous (Section 650)** course is delivered entirely online with required live class meetings occurring on designated days and times. Instruction is conducted through the university-approved web conferencing platform, while all instructional materials, assignments, assessments, recordings (when appropriate), and student communications are maintained within the University's Learning Management System (Blackboard).

IV. Standard Days and Times for Online Synchronous Courses (Section 650)

Section 650 is designated for Online Synchronous (OLS) courses. These courses require scheduled live online meetings using the university-approved web conferencing platform. Standard meeting patterns provide consistency, reduce scheduling conflicts, and improve student planning.

Three 50-Minute Meetings

Days	Meeting Length	Start	End
MWF	50 Minutes	8:00 AM	8:50 AM
MWF	50 Minutes	9:00 AM	9:50 AM (Prime Time)
MWF	50 Minutes	10:00 AM	10:50 AM (Prime Time)
MWF	50 Minutes	11:00 AM	11:50 AM (Prime Time)
MWF	50 Minutes	12:00 PM	12:50 PM
MWF	50 Minutes	1:00 PM	1:50 PM
MWF	50 Minutes	2:00 PM	2:50 PM
MWF	50 Minutes	3:00 PM	3:50 PM

MWF	50 Minutes	4:00 PM	4:50 PM
MWF	50 Minutes	5:00 PM	5:50 PM (Evening)

Two 75-Minute Meetings

Days	Meeting Length	Start	End
TR	75 Minutes	8:00 AM	9:15 AM
TR	75 Minutes	9:30 AM	10:45 AM (Prime Time)
TR	75 Minutes	11:00 AM	12:15 PM (Prime Time)
TR	75 Minutes	12:30 PM	1:45 PM
TR	75 Minutes	2:00 PM	3:15 PM
TR	75 Minutes	3:30 PM	4:45 PM
TR	75 Minutes	5:00 PM	6:15 PM (Evening)

One Weekly Evening Meeting

Days	Meeting Length	Start	End
Monday-Friday	2 Hours 50 Minutes	6:00 PM	8:50 PM

Scheduling Requirements

- Online Synchronous courses must use one of the approved standard meeting patterns.
- Meeting days and times must appear in Banner and the published course schedule.

- Course content, assignments, grades, and communications must be maintained in Blackboard.
 - Departments may not establish custom meeting times outside the approved schedule without institutional approval.
 - Faculty must publish attendance expectations in the course syllabus.
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X. Instructional Expectations

Faculty assigned to teach an **Online Synchronous (Section 650)** course are expected to deliver instruction that promotes student engagement, instructional quality, and compliance with institutional, state, and accreditation requirements.

Faculty teaching Online Synchronous courses shall:

- Conduct live instructional sessions on the days and times published in the official university class schedule.
- Maintain an active instructional presence through meaningful interaction with students during scheduled synchronous class meetings.
- Use **Zoom**, the University's approved web conferencing platform, for all required live instructional sessions.
- Utilize **Blackboard**, the University's official Learning Management System (LMS), as the primary repository for course materials, assignments, assessments, grades, announcements, and student communications.
- Clearly communicate attendance expectations, participation requirements, technology requirements, and course expectations within the course syllabus.
- Provide timely feedback and maintain regular communication with students throughout the semester.
- Design and facilitate instructional activities that support the approved student learning outcomes for the course.
- Ensure all instructional materials and digital content comply with applicable accessibility standards and university policies.
- Maintain academic integrity by following university policies regarding student authentication, assessments, and the appropriate use of instructional technologies.
- Notify students in advance of any changes to scheduled synchronous class meetings and provide alternative instructional activities when necessary in accordance with university policy.

Recording of Class Sessions

Faculty are encouraged to record synchronous class sessions when pedagogically appropriate to support student learning and provide reasonable access for students who are unable to attend due to approved university absences or extenuating circumstances. Recorded sessions should be made available through Blackboard in accordance with university policies governing privacy, accessibility, and intellectual property.

Office Hours

Faculty shall maintain student office hours consistent with university policy. Office hours may be conducted virtually using approved university technologies and should be clearly communicated to students within the course syllabus.

This section establishes the instructional expectations unique to **Section 650** while remaining consistent with your broader Distance Learning Policy.

X. Institutional Commitment

This policy ensures that TAMUK remains in compliance with accreditation requirements, supports student success, and advances excellence in digital education.

Through structured certification, course quality assurance, and continuous monitoring, TAMUK reinforces its commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible, and innovative distance learning experiences.