Table of Contents

Welcome ........................................................................................................................................... 7
About BRTC ....................................................................................................................................... 8
Traveling between Locations .............................................................................................................. 8
BRTC Mission, Vision, Values, & Strategic Priorities ...................................................................... 8
Disclaimer ......................................................................................................................................... 9

General Information for Faculty

Bookstore ........................................................................................................................................... 9
Classroom Assignment ..................................................................................................................... 10
Copy Machine Codes .......................................................................................................................... 10
Faculty Identification Cards .............................................................................................................. 10
Faculty Orientation ............................................................................................................................ 10
Instructor Information Sheet & Update Form ...................................................................................... 10
Key Distribution ................................................................................................................................. 10
Library ................................................................................................................................................ 10
Mailboxes & Email ............................................................................................................................. 11
Moodle Account ................................................................................................................................. 11
MyBRTC Portal/Colleague .................................................................................................................. 11
Office Space ....................................................................................................................................... 11
Office Phone ....................................................................................................................................... 12
Parking ................................................................................................................................................. 12
Purchasing .......................................................................................................................................... 12

Faculty Responsibilities & Policies

Academic Committees ........................................................................................................................ 12
Academic Freedom & Responsibilities ............................................................................................... 13
Advising ............................................................................................................................................... 13
Class Scheduling ............................................................................................................................... 14
Commencement Attendance .............................................................................................................. 14
Copyright & Fair Use .......................................................................................................................... 14
Course Development .......................................................................................................................... 14
Course Grades & Records ................................................................................................................... 15
Early Alert Referrals ............................................................................................................................ 16
Faculty Code of Conduct ...................................................................................................................... 17
Faculty Contracts ................................................................. 17
Faculty Duties & Responsibilities ........................................ 17
Faculty Effort & Workload .................................................... 18
Faculty Forum ...................................................................... 19
Faculty Participation in Student Functions ............................ 19
Faculty Qualifications/Credentials ......................................... 19
Faculty Research & Publications ........................................... 20
Independent Study ................................................................ 21
In-Service & Professional Development Participation ............. 21
Notifying Students of Canceled Classes .................................. 21
Office Hours ....................................................................... 22
Outside Employment ........................................................... 22
Personal Appearance ............................................................ 22
Protection of Student Information/FERPA ............................... 22
Publication of Instructional Materials ...................................... 22
Resignation & Retirement ..................................................... 22
Sabbatical Leave .................................................................. 23
Salary Schedule .................................................................... 23
Sales to Students .................................................................. 23
Student Organizations ........................................................... 24
Supplementary Class Activities .............................................. 24
Syllabus Requirements .......................................................... 24
Textbook Selection & Adoption .............................................. 24

Distance Education Policies

Overview .............................................................................. 25
Course Duration ................................................................... 26
Instructor Requirements ....................................................... 26
Instructor Assignment to Online Classes ............................... 26
Mentors ............................................................................. 26
Scheduling for Full-time Faculty ............................................ 26
Instructor Log-on Requirements ............................................ 27
Instructor Presence .............................................................. 27
Requesting Access to Moodle .............................................. 28
Moodle Courses ................................................................. 28

2018-2019 Faculty Handbook 3
Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to Black River Technical College! As we begin the 2018-2019 academic year, I want to thank you for your commitment to our institution, but more specifically to the academic growth of our students and their academic and career success. Fall is my favorite time of year – it is a time of excitement and energy as faculty and students return to campus. As the year progresses, let’s not lose the excitement!

As members of the BRTC faculty, you have chosen to teach at an institution where student learning and success are at the forefront of our thoughts and practices. I applaud you for your commitment to this philosophy. Not only do we want students to be successful while attending BRTC, but successful as they enter the work-force of their chosen career, or as they continue their education at a four-year institution.

In Experience and Education, John Dewey stated, “The most important attitude that can be formed is that of desire to go on learning.” As faculty, I believe it is our responsibility to instill the desire and love of learning to our students – YOU provide the resource for student success in promoting life-long learning.

This faculty handbook is meant to provide you with policies and procedures needed during this academic year. Please take time to review its contents and feel free to inquire if you have questions, suggestions, or concerns.

I congratulate for your dedication to our students, your discipline and to Black River Technical College, and look forward to a successful year!

Sincerely,

Sheila Taylor

Sheila Taylor, Ed.D.

Vice-President for Academics
About BRTC

Founded as Black River Vocational Technical School in 1972, the school is now a public, two-year college with an open admissions policy committed to meeting the technical, academic, professional, cultural, and personal enrichment needs of the citizens of Northeast Arkansas and the surrounding areas. The college was renamed Black River Technical College in 1991 and is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of the State of Arkansas.

BRTC’s main campus is located in Pocahontas, with an additional location in Paragould:

BRTC - Pocahontas
1410 Highway 304 East
P.O. Box 468
Pocahontas, Arkansas  72455
(870) 248-4000

BRTC - Paragould
1 Black River Drive
Paragould, Arkansas  72450
(870) 239-0969

Business hours for both locations are 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. through 3:30 p.m. on Friday.

Traveling between Locations

Many faculty members are required to teach courses at both the Pocahontas and the Paragould locations. College transportation may be requested for travel between locations, as available, but travel expenses are not reimbursed to full-time faculty members. When traveling between the two locations, instructors may take one of two routes: via Highways 67 and 412 or via Highways 304, 34, and 135. Directions for both routes (beginning at the Pocahontas location) are below:

Highways 304, 34, & 135: Leaving the Pocahontas location, turn east (left) onto Highway 304 E and continue for 14.7 miles. Highway 304 will then become Highway 34 N. Continue for another 16.6 miles. Take a slight right onto Highway 135 N, and follow approximately 4 miles until it runs into Highway 49 N. Turn left onto Highway 49. Take the third left onto N 12th Avenue, and then take the first left onto Black River Drive.

Highways 67 & 412: Leaving the Pocahontas location, turn west (right) onto Highway 304. Turn left onto Highway 67 at the stoplight, continuing south on 67 for 11.55 miles. Take the U.S. 412 ramp toward Paragould/Walnut Ridge, and then turn left onto Highway 412 E. Continue on 412 for 24.43 miles, and then take a slight left onto West Court Street. Turn left onto Highway 49 N, continuing for 3.15 miles. Turn right onto N 12th Avenue, and then take the first left onto Black River Drive.

BRTC Mission, Vision, Values, & Strategic Priorities

BRTC’s Mission Statement
Black River Technical College transforms lives through quality academic and career education to enhance the community we serve.

BRTC’s Vision Statement
BRTC will lead our community in learning and economic development.
BRTC’s Values

BRTC’s adopted values are listed below:

- **Students**—Students’ needs are the foundation of our academic, co-curricular, and financial planning.
- **Quality**—At Black River, we strive to provide our students with excellent academic programs, encouraging support services, and administrative support to meet students’ goals.
- **Learning**—We provide degree programs, professional training, enrichment experiences, and collaborative opportunities to foster career and personal improvement.
- **Community Relationships**—The strengths and challenges of our community shape us. We collaborate with our community to share strengths and resources, learn together, and address the needs of our region.

Strategic Plan 2017-2021

BRTC’s current strategic plan is described below:

**Goal 1:** Manage enrollment responsibly and ensure student success

**Goal 2:** Clarify the identity of the college through heightened brand awareness, focused educational programs, and effective communication

**Goal 3:** Exercise regional leadership through strategic partnerships and educational opportunities

**Goal 4:** Create a culture of evidence to facilitate continuous improvement

Disclaimer

Please note that the Faculty Handbook is not intended to replace the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*. For a complete list of college policies and procedures, please refer to the *Policies and Procedures Manual*, which is posted on the BRTC website and available in the Human Resources Office.

**General Information for Faculty**

**Bookstore**

The BRTC Bookstore, located at the Pocahontas location, stocks most general and required supplies for classes, as well as a variety of miscellaneous items. Graduation caps and gowns are also distributed through the bookstore. Bookstore hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. during regular semesters. The book sales have been moved to an online platform. Students should order their textbooks from the following website: [https://blackrivertech.textbookx.com](https://blackrivertech.textbookx.com). Students may also sell used textbooks on this site. Bookstore staff are available to provide assistance to both students and faculty.
Classroom Assignment

Classroom assignments will be determined by the Registrar in coordination with the Vice President of Academics. No classroom changes should be made without the approval of the Registrar.

Copy Machine Codes

All faculty (full-time and adjunct) will be provided a five-digit departmental code that will allow access to the copy machines at both locations. This code can be obtained from the Office of Finance. A copy machine is available in each of the three workrooms at the Pocahontas location (AD 111; HSC 241; and BT 123). At the Paragould location, copy machines are located in Room 116 of the Academic Complex, Room 111B of the Training Complex, and Room 108 of the Math Center.

Faculty Identification Cards

Upon hire faculty members may request a Faculty Identification Card in the Office of Student Affairs.

Faculty Orientation

An orientation for all new full-time faculty will be held prior to the beginning of the fall semester each year. This orientation is coordinated by the Office of Human Resources.

Instructor Information Form & Update Form

Upon hire each faculty member should complete the Instructor Information Form. Completion of this form will allow for the creation of a BRTC email account and access to the student information system (i.e., POISE/Campus Connect). This information is to be updated annually.

Key Distribution

Requests for building and room keys must be made using the online Key Request Form available on the BRTC Forms webpage. Instructors must log in and complete the form, indicating the building and/or room number for the keys needed. Keys will then be delivered by personnel from the Maintenance Department.

Library

The BRTC Library, located on the Pocahontas campus, provides a number of services to BRTC faculty, staff, students, and community members. The library provides access to information in a variety of formats, including over 25,000 printed items and access to over 20 online databases. Many of these databases provide full-text accessibility to thousands of magazine and journal articles. Books and journal articles that are unavailable directly via the BRTC Library can be obtained through interlibrary loan (requires a 10-day advance notice) or via ARKLink. ARKLink is a nonprofit organization of 49 college and university libraries cooperating to deliver services and collections to students, faculty, and staff researchers in Arkansas. The BRTC library’s online databases can be accessed directly from any campus computer, and they can be accessed with a username and password from off-campus locations. For more information on library services, contact the library staff at (870) 248-4060 or visit the library webpage at http://www.blackrivertech.org/black-river-technical-college-library.
Mailboxes & Email

Physical mailboxes are located in the main workroom (AD 111) on the Pocahontas campus. Mail is delivered daily between campuses. Faculty are expected to check their mailboxes at least once weekly and at the end of each term.

A majority of the communication at BRTC occurs through the campus email system. All faculty and staff are assigned an email upon hire and are expected to monitor incoming messages on a daily basis.

Moodle Account

Moodle is BRTC’s learning management system and is used (1) as the learning platform for all distance education courses; (2) as a supplement to traditional courses; (3) as a tool for all faculty and students to expand the integration of technology and education; and (4) as a communication tool to provide faculty and students with access to campus announcements and general information. All instructors are assigned a Moodle account upon hire, and distance education instructors are required to offer the majority of their online courses via Moodle. Instructors of traditional courses are also encouraged to use Moodle to post course syllabi, important course documents, and student grades. Faculty and students may log onto BRTC’s Moodle system using any web browser by going to https://moodle.blackrivertech.org.

MyBRTC Portal/Colleague

Log-In Information. BRTC’s student information system is Colleague, which is accessed through the college’s portal (MyBRTC Portal). The portal can be accessed at https://mybrtc.blackrivertech.org. The portal can be used for the following tasks:

- Searching for courses and sections
- Checking course rosters
- Submitting no-show rosters
- Submitting midterm grades
- Submitting final grades
- Advising assigned advisees
- Clearing advisees for registration
- Accessing employee information
- Time entry/approval
- Accessing recent campus events, news, and announcements

Faculty will be assigned a username and password upon hire to access the portal. Typically, a faculty member’s username is firstname.lastname. For example, the username for Instructor Mary Johnston would be mary.johnston. Faculty will set their own passwords the first time they access the portal. Specific instructions for advising, retrieving rosters, submitting grades, etc. are available on the college intranet.

Office Space

Per Policy Number 4150 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, “It is expected that faculty members will take the initiative in scheduling private and small group conferences with students to assist them in achieving a better understanding of the discipline being studied. It is the intent of the Board and administration to provide each full-time teaching faculty member with a private office to facilitate the
holding of such conferences in reasonable privacy and to give the faculty member a place where he/she can work without distraction.”

Based upon this policy, all full-time faculty will be assigned an office space on their home campus. In most cases faculty will have a private office. Occasionally, faculty must share an office due to space limitations, but every effort will be made to ensure adequate space and privacy are provided.

**Office Phone**

All full-time faculty will be assigned a campus extension for college-related phone communications.

**Parking**

All faculty must obtain a registration/parking permit to display from the rear-view mirror of vehicles parked on campus. Permits are available at the Student Payment Window in the Office of Finance. The first permit obtained is free of charge; additional permits may be purchased for $5.00.

Faculty must park within faculty and staff parking, which is designated with white painted lines. Student parking is designated with yellow painted lines. Each parking area has both faculty and student parking. When parking, drivers are required to pull into a parking space; back-in parking is only allowed in handicap parking spaces.

**Purchasing**

All college purchases must follow the requirements set forth in the *BRTC Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual*. This manual and other purchasing guidelines can be found on the college’s purchasing webpage for faculty and staff. This webpage also provides the link to the following:

- Goddess/Office Depot (the required vendor for office supply purchases)
- The Electronic Purchase Request System
- Business Card Request Form
- Purchasing card information and forms
- Wyndham travel discount information

**Faculty Responsibilities & Policies**

**Academic Committees**

- **Curriculum Committee.** BRTC’s Curriculum Committee is responsible assuring that all curriculum offered is conducive to higher learning as set forth by BRTC’s policies and to ensure all curriculum is in compliance with the guidelines provided by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission. The Curriculum Committee is an eight-person committee composed of 7 faculty members with staggered two-year appointments and the Registrar, who serves permanently with *ex officio* status.

- **Assessment Committee.** The Assessment Committee is responsible for providing formal review and approval of student learning outcomes and assessments on proposals for new courses and programs and on proposals for curricular changes. Because the Curriculum Committee is the gateway for matters related to academic affairs, the Curriculum Committee will forward all relevant outcomes assessment
matters to the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee is composed of five faculty members on a staggered two-year rotation.

**Program Review Committee.** The Program Review Committee is responsible for ensuring all current and newly-proposed programs are relevant to student and institutional success. The Curriculum Committee will forward all relevant matters to the Program Review Committee for approval. The Program Review Committee is composed of five faculty members on a staggered two-year rotation.

**Academic Affairs Committee.** All items initially approved by the Curriculum Committee must be forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee for further approval. The Academic Affairs Committee is composed of the Vice President of Academics and all academic deans, directors, and other direct-reports. Items approved by the Academic Affairs Committee will be sent to the Executive Team (for either approval or information) and then to the Board of Trustees (when applicable).

**Program Advisory Committees.** Program Advisory Committees consist of individuals from the work world who advise specific BRTC programs on program improvement and development; student support; career information; and public relations and information. The role of these committees is strictly advisory—they have no legislative or administrative authority. Advisory Committees should work with college faculty in programmatic planning, curriculum changes/recommendations, and other related activities.

Program Advisory Committees meet at least once per academic year. Programmatic faculty are required to participate in these meetings. For more information, see the *Occupational Program Advisory Committee Handbook*, which can be obtained from the office of the Vice President of Academics.

**Academic Freedom & Educational Responsibilities**

Per Policy Number 4115 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, the BRTC Board of Trustees has adopted the following statement (as expressed by the American Association of University Professors and now widely accepted by many groups) on academic freedom:

- The instructor is entitled to full academic freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his/her other academic duties, but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the college.
- The instructor is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject, but he/she should be careful not to introduce into his/her teaching controversial matter which has no relation to his/her subject.
- The institution’s instructor is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When he/she speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but his/her special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a man/woman of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember that the public may judge his/her profession and his/her institution by his/her utterances. Hence, he/she should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that he/she is not an institutional spokesperson.

**Advising**

Per Policy Number 4275 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, all full-time instructors will serve as academic advisors to students. Each student will be assigned an academic advisor whose teaching
discipline is in the area of the student’s declared major or area of interest. Academic advisors will contact their assigned students starting the third week of each fall and spring semester. Academic advisors will make two attempts to contact students for advising. If the advisor is unsuccessful in his/her attempts to contact a student, he/she will forward the student’s information to Student Success Coordinator.

Class Scheduling

Course assignments will be determined by the Vice President of Academics in coordination with the academic deans.

Commencement Attendance

Per Policy Numbers 4106 and 6140 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all full-time faculty are expected to attend and participate in commencement exercises. Faculty must wear academic regalia during graduation ceremonies. Excusal from participation must come from the college President.

Copyright & Fair Use

It is the intent of BRTC’s Board of Trustees that college employees comply with the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code, Sect. 101, et seq.). Policy Number 2181 in the Policies and Procedures Manual represents a sincere effort to observe this law and states the following:

- BRTC employees are prohibited from copying copyrighted works unless the action is authorized by (a) specific exemptions in the copyright law, (b) the principle of fair use, (c) the fair use guidelines, or (d) licenses or written permission from the copyright owner. Any other copying must be approved by the college's Copyright Officer on a case-by-case basis.
- Employees are prohibited from "performing" copyrighted works unless the performance is authorized by (a) Title 17, U.S. Code, Sec. 110 (1) (4) or (8), (b) performance licenses, (c) purchase order authorization, or (d) written permission from the copyright owner or the owner's agent.
- The President shall appoint a Copyright Officer who shall (a) implement this copyright policy, (b) prepare and distribute a Faculty Copyright Manual, (c) conduct training programs to assure that employees are aware of the copyright law, (d) answer questions about the copyright law, (e) maintain appropriate records of permission, agreements, and licenses, (f) place appropriate copyright warning notices on or near copying equipment, and (g) other related duties, as needed.
- Employees who willfully disregard the college's copyright policy do so at their own risk and assume all liability, including the possibility of dismissal for persistent copyright infringements. If the Copyright Officer is aware of copyright infringements by an employee, he/she shall counsel the infringer. If the employee continues to infringe the copyright law, the Copyright Officer shall inform the President of the continuing infringements. The President shall take appropriate steps to stop illegal actions. If the infringer refuses to stop the infringements, the President shall take appropriate steps to terminate the employment of the persistent infringer.

Course Development

Per Policy Number 4345 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, new course development and revision of existing courses shall be developed by the department concerned and presented to the Academic Affairs Curriculum Committee in accordance with established regulations. A proposal template for new courses and existing course revisions is available on the BRTC website. The proposal must be completed and submitted to the Chair of the Academic Affairs Curriculum Committee for review and
approval recommendation. Recommendations of the Academic Affairs Curriculum Committee shall be presented, when appropriate, to the Academic Assessment Committee and/or the Program Review Committee, and to the Academic Affairs Committee. If the proposed changes do not have an impact on the offering of a degree, the President’s Executive Team is provided notification of said changes only. If the changes impact the offering of a degree, the President’s Executive Team will vote on said changes and present them to the Board of Trustees for approval. When appropriate, the changes will be forwarded to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

Course Grades & Records

**General Grade Information & Guidelines.** Grades are reported to the Registrar twice during each term – at midterm for counseling purposes and the final grade at the end of the term. Faculty members are responsible for posting both midterm and final grades for every student in every assigned course section as set forth in the academic calendar. Faculty members are responsible for determining and assigning both grades and status based on objective evaluation of student performance. Grading standards and methodologies must be provided to students in writing at the beginning of the course within the syllabus. BRTC uses a four-point (4.00) grading scale. Grade points are awarded on the following basis: A – 4 points; B – 3 points; C – 2 points; D – 1 point; and F -0 points. Grading policies are outlined below:

- The College grading system will consist of letter grades A-F and status conditions (described below) which are determined and assigned by faculty based upon evaluation of student performance.
- Reports reflecting grades and status conditions are issued by the college to students for the Fall Semester, the Spring Semester, and the Summer Term(s).
- Developmental education courses are assigned grade designations, but no quality points or quality hours are generated.
- No grade other than “I” may be changed after it is recorded unless a faculty member finds that a grade has been erroneously recorded. The faculty may correct the grade by submitting a written request and explanation of the error to the Vice President of Academics.
- The Registrar determines whether credit may be transferred from another institution of higher education. The Registrar may consult, if necessary, with appropriate faculty members. Credits to be considered for transfer must have been earned at a post-secondary institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency, and the student must have earned a grade of “C” or better in the course(s) involved. Transferred credit is included in earned hours but does not affect a student’s BRTC grade point average (students who transfer credits to BRTC must, therefore, still earn a 2.00 cumulative GPA on all hours taken at BRTC to be eligible for graduation).
- Test-out and prior-learning credits are not included in credit computations for financial aid programs. Credit awarded is included in earned hours but does not affect a student’s grade point average.
- Credits taken more than five years prior are subject to review by the Vice President of Academics in consultation with the Registrar if applied to an academic credential or objective. This policy applies to credits accepted in transfer from another institution and to credits taken at BRTC prior to declaring a new degree or certificate objective to which the credits apply.

**Incompletes.** An instructor may, at his or her discretion, assign an “Incomplete” as a student’s final grade if extenuating circumstances prevent the student from completing all coursework. Students must meet the following conditions to be eligible for an incomplete grade:

- The student must request in advance a grade of “Incomplete” from the instructor of the course and must make arrangements for completing the coursework with the instructor.
At the time of the incomplete request, the student must have completed at least 60% of the academic semester. Each instructor may set a higher completion level requirement for his/her individual course.

At the time of the incomplete request, the student must have a “C” or above in the course.

At the time of the incomplete request, the student must be in compliance with all course requirements as outlined in the course syllabus, including attendance requirements.

The instructor of the course has sole discretion in initiating an incomplete grade request. Instructors may deny an incomplete request even if a student meets the minimum requirements outlined above.

Students receiving an “Incomplete” have one semester to make up missed coursework. For example, an “I” assigned during a fall semester must have coursework completed prior to the end of the subsequent spring semester. An “I” for assigned during a spring semester dictates that a student must have coursework completed prior to the end of the subsequent Summer II semester. An “I” assigned during either summer term requires that coursework be completed by the end of the subsequent fall semester. If work is not completed and submitted to the instructor within the specified time frame, the “I” becomes an “F” on the student’s transcript. The instructor is responsible for completing an official Change of Grade Form and submitting it first to the Vice President of Academics and then the Registrar upon receipt and grading of remaining coursework.

**Administrative Withdrawals.** Administrative Withdrawals (AW’s) are only granted after the student-initiated drop date has passed. Administrative Withdrawals are can only be issued by either the Vice President of Enrollment Management or the Registrar. All Administrative Withdrawals must have justifiable extenuating circumstances and must have supporting documentation to prove need for drop. Examples of supporting documentation include a letter from a medical professional, obituaries, or documentation from attorneys/the court system. Allied Health and LETA programs are exempt from this process; students may be dropped for policy violations with an Administrative Withdrawal according to the policies put in place for these specific programs. Students who request Administrative Withdrawals that are not approved will be notified.

**Grade Designations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grade Point(s) Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Passing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Passing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>In Progress/Incomplete</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrew</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audited</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early Alert Referrals**

Black River Technical College is committed to the success of its students. To ensure every student takes advantage of the educational opportunities offered at the college, BRTC encourages faculty to use the Early Alert Referral system. The purpose of these referrals is to assist students when difficulties arise so that appropriate support services can be identified.
Instructors should review student performance records frequently in order to identify struggling students. As soon as poor-performing students are identified, instructors should personally contact each student to discuss concerns and/or devise a plan for improving performance. If the instructor is unable to successfully contact a student or if student performance continues to decline despite instructor intervention, an Early Alert Referral should be submitted via Colleague. The referrals will be sent to the Student Success Coordinator.

**Faculty Code of Conduct**

Faculty are expected to engage in ethical and professional behavior as outlined in BRTC’s “Code of Professional Ethics for Faculty and Staff.” This document, along with the entire *Policies and Procedures Manual*, can be accessed via Colleague.

**Faculty Contracts**

Faculty contracts are renewed on an annual basis are typically issued prior to the official start date of an academic year. Contract renewal is based primarily upon satisfactory formal faculty evaluation (see the section “Faculty Evaluation” for additional information). The BRTC Board of Trustees provide official approval of contracts after receiving recommendations from the Vice President of Academics. Per Policy Number 4155 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, faculty whose performance is not considered satisfactory will be consulted as early as possible. They will be given friendly, direct suggestions as to how their performance falls short of institutional standards and how they can improve the quality of their work. Oftentimes, an improvement plan will be placed in the faculty member’s personnel file, and reference to such will be made in the instructor’s subsequent contract(s) until identified concerns are rectified. All faculty members are to be notified in writing no later than April 20 if they are not to be recommended for contract renewal. However, actual employment is contingent upon Board approval.

**Faculty Duties & Responsibilities**

Per Policy Number 4106 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, teaching is the primary responsibility of BRTC faculty members. Under the appropriate supervision, all instructors assume the following duties and responsibilities:

- Teach students in assigned classes in accordance with the course descriptions published in the catalog, the course syllabus, and with instructional procedures agreed upon by the respective academic deans and the Vice President of Academics.
- Participate in committee activities as required by the Vice President of Academics.
- Keep up-to-date in the teaching field and continue professional growth through graduate courses, in-service training, community service, work experience, and/or other related activity.
- Maintain attendance, scholastic, and other records, and submit information and reports in a timely manner as required by the registrar, department head, respective dean, or the Vice President of Academics.
- Meet classes regularly and punctually, and be prepared to conduct them as effectively as possible.
- Maintain appropriate course rigor for the subject matter and content area being taught.
- Be familiar with the philosophy of two-year higher education institutions in general, and the philosophy, mission, and goals of BRTC specifically.
- Attend all faculty meetings and in-service trainings unless excused by the respective academic dean or the Vice President of Academics.
• Post and maintain regular office hours for advising and consulting with students.
• Be aware that faculty members’ teaching schedules may vary each semester and must be approved by the respective academic dean or the Vice President of Academics.
• Have all course syllabi updated and on file with the Vice President of Academics.
• Cooperate in the development of curriculum and preparation of course outlines and in the selection of textbooks, library materials, instructional materials, equipment, and supplies.
• See that the laboratory/shop and all equipment is well-maintained, clean, and conducive to an educational setting.
• Assist in the registration process (i.e., advising).
• Assist in the preparation of departmental budgets and staying within budgetary guidelines.
• Participate in graduation ceremonies unless excused by the college President.
• Participate in assessment efforts as they relate to an instructor’s discipline under the direction of the respective Dean, Dean of Assessment and Accreditation, or the Vice President of Academics.
• Conduct and report assessment of student learning outcomes at the course and programmatic levels according to guidelines from the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation and the Vice President of Academics.
• Maintain appropriate documentation of changes to courses and/or programs that occur due to assessment activities that will enhance and/or improve student learning.

Faculty Effort & Workload

Per Policy Number 4135 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, equitable determination of faculty effort is based upon the following criteria for full-time faculty:

• A normal load for faculty requires a minimum of 30 hours a week, which includes a combination of class, laboratory, shop, clinical, and office time.
• It is understood that a regular, full-time faculty member may be assigned a combination day and evening courses as a part of their teaching load.
• Off-campus classes may be a part of an instructor’s teaching load.
• Any course taught in excess of the number of courses assigned as a normal load is considered as part-time employment, and the instructor will be paid on adjunct schedule under a separate contract denoted as an overload contract. Situational overloads may occur from time to time for a specialist in a particular area. Special consideration may be given to these program needs. All overload courses/contracts must be approved by the Vice President of Academics.

As stipulated within full-time faculty contracts, instructors may be required to teach on either or both BRTC campuses, as enrollment and other situational factors dictate. Instructors may also be required to teach courses in a variety of modalities (i.e., face-to-face, compressed video (CVN), online, and hybrid) and across a variety of time frames (i.e., 16-week, 4-week, 8-week, evening, and weekend courses).

Per Policy Number 4245 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, in the event of a short-term instructor absence, every effort will be made to utilize a member of the department in which the absence occurs. Such service will be without additional compensation. When the absence is to be a week or longer or when it is impossible to properly staff a class with a regular instructor, the administration is authorized to employ an interim instructor for whatever period of time is necessary.

2018-2019 Faculty Handbook 18
Faculty Forum

In an effort to promote shared governance and to provide faculty with a platform for communicating thoughts and ideas, the Faculty Forum was established during the Fall 2016 semester. The mission of the Faculty Forum is “to create a safe and proactive environment where faculty can openly share opinions and ideas.” The Faculty Forum operates according to policies and procedures listed within its Constitution and Bylaws, which can be accessed on the Faculty Forum’s Google site on the campus intranet.

The Faculty Forum is composed of Professional Members and Associate Members. All full-time teaching faculty are eligible to be Professional Members. For Faculty Forum purposes, “full-time” means that the faculty member instructs at least 12 credit-hours for the fall semester and for the spring semester, and the credit hours may not be contracted under a separate adjunct teaching contract. Faculty members who are classified as faculty but instruct only one to three courses (one to eleven credit hours) per semester are not eligible to be Professional Members. Adjunct faculty will be eligible for Professional Membership after teaching 18 credit hours with the recommendation of three Professional Members. All adjunct faculty are eligible to be Associate Members of the Faculty Forum. Staff members who are also adjunct instructors are eligible for Faculty Forum membership if they are not members of the Staff Forum. For more information and a list of current Faculty Forum officers, you may visit the Faculty Forum webpage on BRTC’s intranet.

Faculty Participation in Student Functions

Per Policy Number 4280 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, faculty are encouraged to attend student functions as a means of developing positive faculty-student relationships.

Faculty Qualifications/Credentials

Per Policy Number 4140 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, BRTC will employ a faculty force of sufficient size and range for the number of programs offered and students enrolled. The number of full-time faculty members who hold appropriate terminal degrees in each program will be sufficient for the student population. BRTC will employ a minimum of one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials for each degree program. Faculty credentials must be appropriate to their assigned duties and disciplines, including the levels at which they teach. Faculty degrees, professional accomplishments in research and creative activity, and experience should be commensurate to their duties.

All faculty must hold degrees, certifications, and licenses from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the U. S. Department of Education (such as the Higher Learning Commission). It is the responsibility of the faculty upon application to produce official transcripts and other documentation to be considered for employment. Official documentation for any additional graduate hours or training received must be provided by the faculty member annually.

General Studies Faculty. The general studies area includes (1) all courses designed for transfer to a senior institution; (2) general studies course in technical/non-degree programs; and (3) courses in which the majority of students transfer to a senior institution. Faculty teaching courses within the general education core shall hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield for which they are teaching. If a faculty member holds a master’s degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach. Some faculty may have equivalent experience to meet some of the educational qualifications in certain situations. Equivalent experience will be determined by the Vice President of Academics, and evidence/documentation for such will be placed
in the faculty member’s file. Typically, faculty members teaching remedial/developmental education courses should hold a master’s degree; however, minimal qualifications to teach remedial/developmental courses are a bachelor’s degree in the discipline being taught.

**Career & Technical Education Faculty.** Some programs offered at BRTC are classified as career and technical education programs, meaning that they are intended to lead directly to employment. Most of BRTC’s associate of applied science degrees, technical certificates, and certificates of proficiency are considered career and technical education programs. Faculty in programs leading to an associate of applied science degree should hold a minimum of an associate’s degree or 60 semester hours in an appropriate bachelor's program, national certification in the discipline, and three years of directly-related work experience. A bachelor's degree is strongly recommended. Faculty in programs leading to either a technical certificate or certificate of proficiency should have a minimum of 18 semester hours of postsecondary education in the field in which they teach or national certification in the discipline and at least four years of directly-related work experience. An associate’s degree and two years of directly-related work experience or a bachelor’s degree are strongly recommended.

**Concurrent Faculty.** All concurrent faculty members must be held to the same credentialing/qualification standards as full-time faculty members. See the section on Concurrent Faculty Qualifications for additional information.

**Adjunct Faculty.** All adjunct faculty members must be held to the same credentialing/qualification standards as full-time faculty members. See the section on Adjunct Faculty Qualifications for additional information.

**Currently-Employed Full-Time Faculty.** All full-time faculty are expected to maintain their professional credentials and expertise in their respective fields of study. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to provide official documentation of additional degrees, certificates, graduate hours, and/or licensure information on an annual basis. The Vice President of Academics will work with faculty members to design individual professional development plans to assist faculty in maintaining their current credentials and expertise or to assist in obtaining the optimum credentials for teaching in their discipline.

**Review of Faculty Credentials.** Respective deans will review credentials annually on faculty who are working to achieve minimum credential requirements and on those who have obtained additional qualifications. A Faculty Roster Form containing classes taught, graduate degree(s), certificates and/or licenses, additional graduate hours, tested experience, and an improvement plan for those lacking credentials will be utilized to assist with this review.

**Faculty Research & Publications**

BRTC operates as a public institution of higher education within the framework of Arkansas legislative directives for community and technical colleges. As such, BRTC is not designated as a research institution. Thus, per Policy Number 4290 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, the BRTC Board of Trustees makes no special provision for the encouragement of research by faculty or staff members other than that required for institutional purposes/analysis. The administration may permit faculty to use college equipment and facilities for the purposes of conducting research as long as such research does not occur during scheduled faculty worktime. In addition, such use of equipment and facilities must not interfere with their use for instructional purposes, nor may it constitute more than nominal expense to the college.
The writing of articles and books is a professional activity the Board wishes to encourage. However, as an institution with instruction as a primary responsibility, no pecuniary allowance will be made for such activities. Nonetheless, credit for professional improvement or professional growth for engaging in these activities may be considered in evaluating the faculty member.

Consistent with Policy Number 7121 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, the College’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) must be consulted prior to engaging in any research that involves human participants (including students). The IRB’s primary role is to ensure the protection and safety of human research participants and that all research endeavors are conducted in an ethical manner. The IRB must examine and approve all research proposals prior to the onset of a research study. See Policy 7121 for additional information.

**Independent Study**

Independent study contracts are approved only for students who need a particular course to graduate and when alternative options are not available. Independent studies must be approved by the Vice President of Academics.

**In-Service & Professional Development Participation**

All full-time faculty are required to attend all scheduled in-service activities prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Excusal from attendance must be provided by the Vice President of Academics.

Per Policy Number 4160 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, requests to attend conferences or professional development activities should be submitted to the respective department chair, who, upon preliminary approval, will then forward to the Vice President of Academics for formal approval. The Vice President for Finance must grant approval for travel expenses that exceed the currently-allowed per diem rate. Each request should be made using the In-service/Meeting Request Form found on the Forms & Information webpage of the BRTC website. The request should include details of the conference/training and any information on expenses. The Vice President of Academics will notify the instructor as to whether the request was approved or denied. Upon return, the faculty member must complete the Meeting/Conference Recap Form (also available on the Forms & Information webpage) and file with the Vice President of Academics.

**Notifying Students of Canceled Classes**

All faculty are required to use Remind© to send text message and email alerts to students in the event that a class must be canceled. Remind© is a communication tool that allows instructors to quickly send messages directly to students via a personal computer or the Remind© app on a smartphone. Instructors who have never used Remind© should visit www.remind.com to set up an account and create a class representing each section of a course the instructor is teaching. Instructors will then be provided with instructions explaining how students can sign up for a Remind© class using a code unique to that class. Each time an instructor needs to notify students of a canceled class (or other important information), he/she will personally send the notification via Remind©. The instructor should subsequently notify his/her respective dean of the cancelation. **Rave alerts are NOT to be used for notification of canceled classes.**
Office Hours

Per Policy Numbers 4150 and 4265 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, faculty members shall post their office hours so students know when instructors are available for conference. Office hours must be reported to and approved by the respective academic deans at the beginning of each fall and spring semester. Faculty are responsible for maintaining posted office hours and appropriately communicating with students when posted office hours cannot be observed.

Outside Employment

In keeping with Policy Number 6115 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, no college employee shall engage in any outside activity, which, in the judgment of the administration, reflects against the institution or college image, is considered unethical, or interferes with his/her regular duties. Likewise, Policy Number 2105 requires that all full-time employees notify their immediate supervisor of any employment outside of BRTC.

Personal Appearance

It is important that faculty maintain a professional standard of dress and grooming appropriate to their work environment to reflect positively on the college. Immediate supervisors are responsible for communicating acceptable dress to members of each department.

Protection of Student Information/FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of educational records. The law applies to all schools/colleges that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. As a general rule, a student’s academic record is confidential and will not be released to unauthorized persons without written approval from the student. However, there are two exceptions to this rule. First, parents of students who are under the age of 18 have the right to inspect and review their children’s educational records. Second, BRTC can release a student’s information to another institution in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. The following items are considered public information and may be made available upon inquiry unless the student requests nondisclosure: name, address, phone number, enrollment status, degrees obtained and dates conferred, and dates of attendance. For additional information regarding FERPA and the protection of student information, please refer to the BRTC Student Handbook.

Publication of Instructional Materials

Per Policy Number 4300 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, the Board of Trustees encourages the writing and publication of auxiliary instructional materials for use in classes at BRTC when appropriate commercially-published materials are not available. The administration will establish controlling regulations regarding the sale and distribution of instructional materials. Likewise, all instructional materials must follow federal copyright regulations.

Resignation & Retirement

Consistent with Policy Number 6110 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, BRTC employees are required to submit a letter of resignation two weeks prior to their last day of employment. Once the resignation letter has been received, the employee must schedule an exit interview with Human
Resources. Policy Number 6215 lists the provisions of BRTC’s Early Retirement Incentive Program, including general eligibility and health insurance guidelines.

Sabbatical Leave

According to Policy Number 2196 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, full-time faculty and administrators who have rendered service to the college for at least seven consecutive years may be granted leave of absence not to exceed one year. Upon approval of the President of the college, sabbatical leave may be granted for the purpose of permitting study or travel which will benefit the college. While on sabbatical leave, the employee may receive a stipend of up to ½ of his/her salary for the previous year. However, benefits do not automatically continue while on sabbatical. No sick or annual leave will accrue, nor will health insurance be paid by the college. When applying for sabbatical, it is imperative that the applicant visit with the Human Resources Office. Any person who files an application for sabbatical leave shall at the same time file an affidavit stating that he/she will accept employment from the college for at least two years following the return from sabbatical leave unless prevented by ill health or other unavoidable conditions. This condition in no way implies that the employee will be guaranteed a contract. Failure for other reasons to return for all or part of the two year period will automatically make the employee liable for return of all or part of the sabbatical stipend paid to the employee. No more than five percent of eligible full-time faculty and one administrator may be granted sabbatical leave at one time.

Salary Schedule

In an effort to ensure a more equitable method for determining beginning salaries for faculty, a salary schedule was endorsed by the BRTC Board of Trustees in May 2015. This salary schedule reflects consideration of both educational level and years of experience in recommending a starting salary for faculty members. However, official beginning salary for a newly-hired faculty member is proposed by the Vice President of Academics and formally approved by the Board.

Per Policy Number 4320 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, advancement on the salary schedule shall be contingent upon the instructor's continued professional growth as outlined in "Professional Growth" and "Professional Improvement" policies. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to withhold a salary increment to any instructional employee who fails to make satisfactory professional improvement after having been notified in writing of areas needing improvement. No change will be made in classification through summer school attendance unless notification of completion of educational increment is filed with the Vice President of Academics prior to May 1 and the required work for such a change is completed prior to September 1. Educational increments will be awarded for completion of hours toward a degree and completion of a degree at the following rates:

- Associate’s Degree + 30 hours: $1,000
- Bachelor’s Degree: $1,000
- Master’s Degree: $1,000
- Master’s Degree + 30 hours: $2,000
- Doctorate: $2,000

Sales to Students

Per Policy Numbers 4225 and 4310 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, faculty on campus shall not have direct dealing with students in the sale of books, instruments, lectures, notes, or similar materials. An instructor acting as an authorized agent of the Vice President for Finance or the bookstore
manager may collect fees or sell textbooks, supplies, or other materials to students enrolled in off-campus classes. All funds are to be handled in the manner prescribed by the Vice President for Finance.

Student Organizations

BRTC recognizes that students derive many benefits from participation in student activities and organizations. Therefore, the administration will direct efforts toward the promotion, support, and direction of such activities as an integral part of the education program. Sufficient time will be provided by the administration to afford adequate sponsorship of the student government and proper direction and assistance to all student activities/organizations. The administration will also ensure that staff direction and assistance do not interfere with or curb the exercising of appropriate initiative, leadership, and responsibility of students. Students may choose to become a member of the organization for which they qualify.

Club advisors are full-time employees of BRTC who provide proper supervision at all college functions. They must have the approval of the college President to act in an advisory capacity. Off-campus student activities may be permitted with the approval of the administration and will be properly supervised by appropriate club advisors.

Supplementary Class Activities

Per Policy Number 4355 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, college administration will encourage supplementary activities such as field trips and attendance at professional functions, on and off campus, in all instructional areas where it is determined that appropriate educational value may be obtained. College funds may be used to encourage such activities where the educational value is deemed to be commensurate with the expense involved. All field trips must have the written approval of the Vice President of Academics or his/her designated representative. In the case of classes where field trips are a continuing and regular class activity, a general continuing approval may be secured. Request must be accompanied by a contemplated schedule of trips for each semester. Appropriate transportation should be reserved, and funds must be budgeted for the class activity.

Syllabus Requirements

Per Policy Number 4350 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, a syllabus of every course offered at Black River Technical College will be kept on file by the Vice President of Academics. Each instructor should have a syllabus for each course he/she is assigned to teach each semester. These syllabi are prepared by the instructor based upon the template provided by the Vice President of Academics. This template may be obtained from one’s respective dean. Syllabi must be provided to students on the first day of class each semester.

Textbook Selection & Adoption

Textbook selection is supervised by the respective academic dean and/or the Vice President of Academics. According to this policy, every possible effort should be made to allow an instructor to adopt the textbook of his/her choosing. However, adequate notice should be given. Where two or more instructors are teaching a common course, every effort should be made to adopt a common text. Official textbooks will be adopted for a period of at least two years. An official list of adopted textbooks will be published by the BRTC Bookstore no later than 12:00 noon on April 1 for the following summer and fall semesters and on November 1 for the following spring. Any late adoption will be required to have the following documentation on file:
Faculty members who are authors of textbooks or manuals that are utilized in courses at BRTC must meet the following guidelines:

- Acknowledge potential conflict of interest via written communication to the Vice President of Academics, who will share with the President and the Executive Team. The communication should include justification for selecting one’s own authored text for the respective course.
- Royalties from the sale of the materials must be disclosed, and it is recommended that these royalty dollars be utilized for the academic benefit of BRTC students (Examples include donations to the BRTC Foundation in support of scholarships or donations to the student activity fund.)

**Distance Education Policies**

**Overview**

Distance education at BRTC includes online, hybrid, and compressed video network (CVN) courses. Online courses are courses that are taught 100% online. Online students are not required to come to campus to complete any portion of an online course and do not require students to be online at any specified times within each week. These courses are a convenience to our students who might not otherwise have an opportunity to attend traditionally-taught courses. Hybrid courses are courses in which 50% or more of the content is online. The remainder of the course meets in the traditional classroom. CVN courses are taught with instructor presence in a classroom with the instruction being televised via compressed video connection to at least one other site. BRTC utilizes the learning management system (LMS) Moodle for delivery of its online and hybrid courses as well as for support of traditional courses.

To support instructors with distance delivery of courses, BRTC has a Distance Education and Instructional Technology (DEIT) Department. The DEIT has many resources available for all instructors, including items for loan and the Instructional Media Studio. Loan items include Surface Pro tablets, webcams, microphones, Chromebooks, etc. The Instructional Media Studio is housed in the DEIT Department at the Pocahontas location. The studio provides instructors adequate space and equipment to produce quality media and digital learning objects for use in online, hybrid and technologically enhanced courses. Online and hybrid instructors are highly encouraged to utilize the facility to create professional video and audio content for their courses.

The DEIT Department contacts are as follows:

Matthew Wilson  
Instructional Technologist  
870.248.4058  
matthew.wilson@blackrivertech.edu

Regina Moore  
Director  
870.248.4049  
regina.moore@blackrivertech.edu
The following policies and procedures reflect a deliberate effort to achieve the following goals:

- To promote the integrity of online instruction, ensuring that BRTC distance education courses are consistent with recommended best practices in the distance delivery of higher education courses.

- To ensure that BRTC’s online courses meet the requirements set forth by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA); the Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education established by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC); and the criteria for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Course Duration

BRTC offers 16-week distance education courses as well as short duration classes. The short duration courses include Winter Break 4-week classes and 4-, 8-, and 10-week classes during fall, spring, and summer terms. Course content must be of the same rigor and quality within the short duration classes as it is in a long-term course. Students are receiving full credit for the course; therefore, the short duration courses must have the same rigor and quality as do 16-week courses.

Instructor Requirements

Instructors who teach distance education courses must meet at least the minimum requirements as set forth in Policy Number 4145 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual (i.e., distance education instructors must be appropriately credentialed; must ensure quality instruction; must maintain a current syllabus; must utilize effective materials in the composition of a course; must include frequent student-to-student and instructor-to-student interaction; and must maintain on-campus office hours).

Instructor Assignment to Online Classes

Instructors must be assigned to online classes no later than two weeks prior to the course’s start date. Respective deans and the Vice President of Academics are responsible for assigning instructors to all distance education courses.

Mentors

Adjunct instructors and instructors new to teaching distance education courses may be assigned a mentor to provide guidance, answer questions, and clarify BRTC policies and procedures. Mentors will be full-time, experienced online faculty and will be selected as needed.

Scheduling for Full-time Faculty

Online courses pose some challenges for scheduling for full-time faculty. The following guidelines identify some of these issues and how to address them.

**Time Shown on Full-time Faculty Schedules.** Teaching time for online classes must be reflected on the course schedules full-time faculty turn in to their respective deans. To show time for an online class that is part of the instructor’s load, identify time during the workday that does not conflict with any other scheduled classes. The faculty member must be on-campus during the time identified for the online class and is expected to be grading or working in the online classroom when on-campus time is
scheduled for an online class. The faculty member must identify to the online students when the faculty member is regularly available for the class.

Overload Classes. For online class(es) scheduled as overload(s) to the instructor's full-time schedule, the faculty member must assign an arbitrary time, such as Monday from midnight to 3 a.m., as time to teach the overload online class. The time identified on the schedule does not have to be actual time faculty are in their online classrooms. However, identifying to the students when faculty are regularly available for the overload class is required.

Online Office Hours. Full-time faculty may schedule two online office hours (evenings and weekends) per each online class, up to a maximum of five online office hours per week for courses that are a part of the their regular load (not overload classes). The online office hours must be scheduled with an instructor’s respective dean. Online office hours must be posted on the faculty member’s class schedule, on the instructor’s office door, and within the Moodle class. The hours are subject to being monitored.

Access to Course if Overload. If a full-time instructor is teaching a course as an overload, he/she should plan to access the course outside of his/her 30 hours of contracted time.

Student Access to a Faculty Member. Faculty must access their course and interact with their students the first day of classes. Faculty are expected to access their class several times a day most days during the first few week of classes to answer questions. A faculty member must notify students when he will be gone or unavailable during regularly scheduled office hours and class time. Faculty and students are best served when faculty identify the best times they can be reached. Faculty are to access their online classes and check on students at least every 48 hours in a 16-week course and every day for a short duration course. The DEIT Department strongly suggests that online faculty access their courses during evenings and weekends in addition to regular working hours.

When a student contacts an instructor, the instructor should reply to students in the same format in which the original message was sent. For example, if a student sends a Moodle message and it is forwarded to the instructor’s email, the instructor should reply via Moodle messaging (not email). Likewise, if a student emails an instructor, the response should be sent via email (not Moodle message). It is highly recommended that all contact with students in an online course be housed in Moodle through announcements, discussion forums, and Moodle messaging.

Instructor Log-on Requirements

Online instructors of 16-week courses are required to log into their Moodle classrooms at least once every 48 hours, including weekends. Online instructors of short duration courses (4-, 8-, and 10-week courses) must log into their Moodle classrooms at least once daily. Online instructors are expected to have substantial interaction with students each week in the form of feedback on assignments, announcements to class, and interaction on forums. In an online course, it is important to have all interactions contained within Moodle so there is documentation of all correspondence and submitted work.

Instructor Presence

Instructors of online and hybrid courses are expected to have a presence in the online classroom and be responsive to students. Along with answering questions posted in the “Questions Forum” and answering emails and Moodle messages in a timely fashion, instructors are expected to have a presence in the discussion forums, provide feedback on assignments, and post announcements and/or reminders as necessary.
Interaction with students on the discussion forums is required and essential to making the online version of the course as interactive as its traditional counterpart. Like the discussion in the traditional classroom, instructors are expected to guide discussions and pose questions to help students think critically about the subject and apply learned theories to garner a more thought provoking discussion.

Feedback on assignments, especially if the student did not receive the maximum points, is important and expected. Written feedback provides students with an understanding of what is needed to improve performance on the next like assignment, better understand the instructor’s expectations, and gain a better understanding of why points were deducted. Without the instructor’s valuable feedback/comments, students will not have the tools needed to perform better on future assignments. If a student receives a perfect score on an assignment, it is not as necessary to give written feedback.

**Requesting Access to Moodle**

If an instructor does not have access to Moodle, contact the DEIT Department for a username and password.

**Moodle Courses**

Beginning in the Fall 2018 semester, Moodle will be integrated with the College’s Student Information System, Colleague. All courses will be created in Moodle from the schedule of courses in the system. Instructors are automatically enrolled into each Moodle course. If another instructor is assigned after the creation of the course, the new instructor will automatically be enrolled. Course name changes are not allowed so that the course remains linked to the Colleague system.

**Enrollment of Students**

Beginning Fall 2018 semester, students will automatically be enrolled into Moodle courses. No combination of courses is allowed. If an instructor is teaching two sections of the same course, there must be two Moodle courses.

Since Colleague and Moodle are linked, students will automatically be suspended if they drop or withdraw from a course. *Once a student has clicked in the course, s/he should never be removed from the course – only suspended.*

**Setting Dates on All Activities**

Dates on all activities and assignments for the entire semester, including topic blocks (date restrictions), must be set with the appropriate open and close dates by the first day of class.

**Assignment Availability Time**

Instructors of traditional, hybrid, and online classes who utilize Moodle to support teaching and learning efforts should have all online quizzes, tests, exams, and other assignments that are to be submitted in the online platform, available to students for a minimum of five days. If a traditional or hybrid instructor opens quizzes/assignments during in-class time and the testing is not allowed outside the classroom, instructors only have to make the quiz available during the allotted time for the class period.
Online Content

Online Courses. BRTC online courses are 100% online. Students do not have to physically be on campus at any time to complete the course. Content in online classes must be made available through Moodle. Only with approval from the Vice President of Academics and notification to the Director of Distance Education and Instructional Technology can outside LMSs (LaunchPad, SAM, MindTap, etc.) be used for delivery of course content or assignments. For the courses using outside LMSs, the majority of the course content must be housed in Moodle. Links to free outside videos and content may be used as necessary.

Hybrid Courses. Hybrid courses must be 50% or more online. The amount of content in the online classroom should be determined by the amount of time the class meets traditionally. Content in hybrid classes must be made available through Moodle. Only with approval from the Vice President of Academics and notification to the Director of Distance Education and Instructional Technology can outside LMSs be used for delivery of course content or assignments.

Instructor Welcome Video

All online courses must have an instructor-made welcome video included in the General block Book. Each semester, instructors should create a new video welcoming their students to the online course and, at a minimum, introducing to the students what to expect in the online course.

Course Opening & Closing and Weekly Content

Online. Online instructors must have courses available to students by 8:30 a.m. the Thursday before classes begin. The General block in Moodle should contain at a minimum the updated course syllabus, tentative weekly schedule, Questions Forum, Student Agreement Questionnaire, and Welcome Video. However, students should not be responsible for class material prior to the first day of class.

Each week's course materials must be available to students by the first day of the week and no later than 8:30 a.m. This includes holidays. If the BRTC campus is closed for a holiday on Monday but an online course's class week starts on Monday, the faculty member must access the course—even though the physical campuses are closed—and make the materials available to students either Sunday night or Monday morning by 8:30 a.m. or have restrict access set for each topic block so that the weeks’ content automatically opens.

Hybrid. Weekly course content for hybrid courses must be made available by the end of the weekly class meeting. However, quizzes and other assignments should be made available for at least five days.

Access over Holidays. Even when there is a holiday or BRTC is closed, online faculty are responsible for making content available to students at the beginning of the course week. If BRTC is closed over a holiday other than a full-week-holiday such as Spring Break, online faculty must ensure students have access to content and assignments. Restricted access can be set for each topic block so that the weeks’ content opens automatically.

Closing. All Moodle classes must be hidden from students by no later than five days after final grades are posted.
Announcements

Announcements to online students should be made through the Announcements forum in the General Block of the course. The announcement forum does not provide students a place to reply, but is simply a place for instructors to announce changes in schedule, reminders of upcoming assignments, or other general information that does not require an answer.

Tentative Weekly Schedule

A tentative weekly schedule that includes due dates, assignments, and assessments must be included in the online classroom. This schedule must be completed for the entire semester before the semester begins including assessment due dates and weekly reading and assignment requirements. The online class week beginning and end must be clearly identified on this schedule (e.g., Sunday – Saturday). The tentative weekly schedule should be a page in the General block Book, which will automatically link to assignments that are no longer hidden. This linking will allow students to click on the assignment name in the tentative weekly schedule to learn more about the assignment. All assignments should be named exactly as they are named on the front page of the course to auto link on the schedule. Faculty should also post the phrase “This schedule is subject to change” at the top of the schedule as a provision for change should the schedule need to be altered after the semester begins.

Discussion Forums

Faculty are expected to include several interactive discussion forums in their online classes each semester. Instructors are expected to interact with students on a weekly basis. This practice promotes student-to-student and faculty-to-student interactions that enrich the online learning experience. *This online interaction should be representative of the classroom discussion in a traditional face-to-face course.*

Each online course must have a Questions Forum in the General Block where students are encouraged to ask questions, and instructors are expected to answer. It is appropriate to have a Questions Forum in weeks where major projects are discussed and/or submitted or in weeks where the content is more challenging. The instructor is expected to be active on the Questions Forums.

Assignments

All assignments identified on the syllabus and tentative schedule must include the date assignments open and the dates assignments are due. Assignment names should have an appropriate title for the activity and be consistently named on the course page, in directions, and on the syllabus and tentative schedule. All activities should be linked in the tentative schedule.

Subjective assignments such as papers, projects, case studies, involved interactive discussion, etc. are encouraged above objective assignments such as multiple choice, true/false, matching questions, etc. While objective assessments have a place in your course, they should not make up a significant portion of the course’s total points. Subjective assignments are preferred because they encourage critical thinking, are more representative of true student learning, and promote academic integrity.

Final Exams

Faculty must give a final exam or assignment (final exam can be a quiz, project, virtual presentation, essay, or other appropriate assessment). Final exams in an online course must be made available online and cannot be mandated to be taken in-person by way of proctoring on the BRTC campus or at another
institution. Hybrid or CVN courses may have on-campus finals testing if given on a day the class normally meets. Online final exams/projects must be made available at a minimum of five days. In a 16-course the final must be given during finals week. In a short duration course, instructors must do the following:

- Identify final exam dates on their tentative schedule, which is made available the Thursday before classes begin.
- Do not open final exams before on-campus finals begin.
- Must be available to students for a minimum of 5 days.

Faculty are encouraged to utilize assignments other than objective exams such as papers, virtual presentations, projects, etc. as their final assignment whenever possible.

**Grading Turnaround**

All instructors must have all tests and assignments (including discussion forums) graded with feedback, if appropriate, within two weeks of the due date of the assignment. If a like test and/or assignment is due before the two-week time frame, instructors should have grading/feedback back to the students within 2-3 days before the next like assignment is due.

Discussion forums may be used as a form of attendance in the online classroom; however, forums must have a due date and must be graded within two weeks of the due date of the assignment. It is unacceptable to have forums ungraded throughout the entire semester.

**Gradebook**

Online and hybrid instructors must utilize the Moodle gradebook for documentation of all grades. Instructors should keep grades up-to-date to within two (2) weeks of due date of assignments at all times in a 16-week course. In a short duration course, instructors should keep grades up-to-date at least twice a week. Further, instructors should ensure the gradebook is available to students and that the gradebook is set up correctly by the first day of class. In case of a catastrophic event, a backup of grades should be saved each time an instructor updates grades in the gradebook.

**Online Academic Integrity & Student Identity Verification**

In order to promote academic integrity within the online classroom and to assist in student identity verification, the DEIT Department provides instructors with access to a variety of academic integrity applications, including Turnitin™, VoiceThread™, and Respondus Monitor™ and Lockdown Browser™. Online instructors are expected to use VoiceThread™ and/or Respondus Lockdown Browser™ and Monitor™ at least once each semester with the requirement that students present a valid ID (i.e., a state-issued ID or current BRTC ID). At least one of these assignments should be incorporated into 16-week online courses by the fourth week and into short-duration courses by the second week.

*Turnitin™*. The DEIT Department encourages faculty to utilize Turnitin™ Assignments (activity named Turnitin Assignment 2) in Moodle for writing-intensive assignments whenever possible to detect plagiarism. The Turnitin™ plugin verifies that uploaded assignments are a student’s own work by checking against other papers submitted and written information on the internet for plagiarism.

*VoiceThread™*. VoiceThread™ is a versatile tool that can be used to identify students in an online class, if the instructor requires showing a valid ID, by use of video discussions and video recordings of projects, speeches, and other applications. Instructors can also easily create voice-over
slides that can be used as a presentation or a presentation that requires students to answer questions or make comments on designated slides.

**Respondus Lockdown Browser™ and Monitor™**. Respondus Lockdown Browser™ and Monitor™ can be used with quizzes and exams to deter cheating. Using Lockdown Browser™ and Monitor™ together ensures student identity when valid ID is required. The use of Lockdown Browser™ by itself is not recommended because students can have multiple people in the room helping or taking the test together, use notes, use textbook, and use other devices.

**Contingency Plan**

Just as instructors require students to have a contingency plan, instructors must have a contingency plan in the event of a natural disaster, power outage, illness, or other emergency. Instructors should consider how they would access their courses if their computers died or if their city lost power for an extended period of time. Hopefully, contingency plans will never need to be implemented, but a contingency plan is essential.

Because distance education courses, especially online courses, rely heavily on technology, loss of power and computer problems cannot be acceptable excuses for students’ missed assignments, nor can it be an excuse for instructors. Just as students on-campus must have a vehicle to reach class, online students must have a computer to access their course. Likewise, instructors must not use those excuses to their students for failure to grade, post assignments, etc. All instructors who teach online should have some type of internet connection available to them outside of work.

Some possible contingency plans include the following:

- Utilizing a smartphone,
- Using a computer at work,
- Using a computer at a parent's or friend's house who lives in another town,
- Taking your laptop to McDonald's or another local business and using its Wi-Fi service,
- Using a computer at a public library.

Likewise, instructors are encouraged to download a copy of their Moodle gradebook periodically.

**Online Course Templates**

Some instructors may be invited by the Vice President of Academics to create online template courses. All template courses will be the intellectual property of BRTC. Any instructor teaching a section of an online course with an approved template will have access to the template class content. Instructors teaching with the template class are welcome to add their own content and activities. Template courses promote continuity between courses, as all template courses will follow prescribed formatting and appearance guidelines.

**New Course Creation**

The following steps must be completed in the creation of a new distance education course:

1. The course creator must complete Online Course Quality Improvement Training (a 7-week online course) or have completed the course in the past.
2. The instructor must write a proposal recommending the course to the Curriculum Committee.
3. Once approval is received from the Curriculum Committee and Academic Affairs, the course development process begins.
4. The course creator should contact the DEIT Department to schedule an initial meeting with the Director and/or Instructional Technologist to discuss goals for the course, timeline for course development, resources, appropriate technology for the course objectives and best practices. A draft syllabus with a tentative schedule of activities must be brought to the meeting. A Moodle course shell will be created at the meeting.
5. The course creator should begin developing the course using the Course Quality Rubric as a guide. Contact the DEIT Department as needed for support. Weekly or bi-weekly meetings are suggested.
6. Once the course is complete, the course creator should contact the Director of DEIT to request a course review.
7. Using the Course Quality Rubric, the DEIT Department will review the new course within a month of the request. Results of the review will be sent to the Vice President of Academics and the respective academic dean.
8. After the Vice President of Academics provides a decision on the review of the course, a copy of the rubric with comments will be forwarded to the course creator. If the course receives a “Pass,” the course will be placed on the next schedule. If the course receives a “Pass with Revisions,” the course will be placed on the next schedule and the instructor will have one semester to complete revisions. If the course receives a “Needs Revision,” revisions must be made and the course reviewed again with a “Pass” before the course is placed on the schedule.

Review Cycle for Online Courses

Online courses are reviewed on a three-year cycle to ensure course quality and rigor. Each online course is reviewed by using the Online Course Quality Improvement Rubric. The schedule or reviews and the Online Course Quality Improvement Rubric are available from the DEIT Department and are posted in the Moodle Faculty Lounge. Once a course is reviewed, the course creator, the Vice President of Academics, and the respective academic dean will receive a copy of the completed rubric. Recommended revisions must be made before the next course offering is open to students.

Professional Development

Online and hybrid instructors are required to attend two hours of professional development each academic year - this can include DE in-service sessions, DE professional development opportunities offered throughout the year, or webinars/conferences related to online teaching and learning.

Faculty Evaluation Guidelines

Per Policy Number 4325 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all full-time faculty will be evaluated on an annual basis. The purpose of evaluation is to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of the faculty member’s work and to support the continuous improvement of the teaching skills of the faculty at BRTC. Evaluation is designed to support faculty in their professional development efforts to maintain in-field currency, to reinforce the importance of effective teaching, and to assist faculty in providing the best possible learning opportunities for our students.

Arkansas Statute (ACA 6-63-104) and the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) policy require that each college and university conduct an annual review of each faculty member’s
performance. An institutional report on the Annual Review of Faculty Performance is submitted to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) each year.

The faculty evaluation program at BRTC includes a five-part system designed to provide an objective measurement of job performance, goals, and objectives for each faculty member. The program consists of an administrative evaluation, classroom evaluation, student evaluation, peer observation, and a self-evaluation. All full-time faculty members are observed by a department head, academic dean, or the Vice President of Academics on an annual basis. Student evaluations are conducted in the fall and spring semesters in every class. Peer observations occur annually at a minimum. Self-evaluations are updated annually. Faculty members complete and submit materials as part of their Professional Portfolio adhering to the guidelines provided by the Vice President of Academics. A file is maintained on each full-time faculty member in the office of the Vice President of Academics. The file contains a vita, summary of student evaluations, summary of classroom observations, final administrative evaluation document, and any special workshops or conferences attended.

The evaluation by the office of the Vice President of Academics serves as a summary of the faculty member’s performance based on the goals and objectives from his/her self-evaluation, student evaluations, class and peer observation, and all aspects of the evaluation program. Information from student evaluations is utilized in discussing how faculty members can improve course delivery and student satisfaction. Achievement of course-level and program-level outcomes will also be discussed during the annual evaluation conference to address improvement in teaching and learning. Any faculty member with non-satisfactory review results will have a specific plan for improvement attached to the evaluation. The employee will be observed and monitored by his/her supervisor each semester with follow-up sessions scheduled based upon the improvement plan. The Vice President of Academics will recommend to the President the status (renewal of contract, issuance of probationary contract, or non-renewal of contract) of each faculty member. This evaluation form is then placed in the faculty member’s personnel file in the Human Resources Department.

**Professional Teaching Portfolio**

In accordance with Policy Number 4325 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, all full-time faculty will maintain a Professional Teaching Portfolio each academic year. Contents of the portfolio are to be updated and submitted annually based upon guidelines and deadlines set forth by the Vice President of Academics. Portfolio guidelines, guidelines for peer observation, and all required portfolio forms can be found on the BRTC Forms webpage.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

**BRTC’s Assessment Framework**

Over the past few years, BRTC faculty, staff, and administration have recognized the importance of formal, systematic outcomes assessment. Systematic assessment and a formal assessment framework now guide faculty and the college in making continued improvements in courses and programs to enhance student learning. BRTC’s assessment framework is represented in the Figure 1.
Figure 1.

As the figure illustrates, assessment at BRTC occurs at three levels: the course level, the program level, and the general education level. The following provides a brief description of each of the levels:

**Course Outcomes Assessment.** All BRTC courses have specific and measurable outcomes, each tied to at least one assessment. Course outcomes represent the knowledge and skills students should attain as a result of successfully completing a course. The same course outcomes are consistently measured across all course modalities and across all course sections, including sections taught by concurrent and adjunct instructors.

**Program Outcomes Assessment.** Program outcomes represent the major skills and competencies that program graduates should develop by the time they complete a program of study. Each program offered at BRTC has adopted a set of program learning outcomes that are assessed in accordance with procedures described in the section titled *Assessment Process*. Program outcomes can be assessed in a variety of ways, including course assignments given in core programmatic courses, third-party assessments, portfolio reviews, pre/post-tests, capstone projects, rubrics, etc.

**General Education Outcomes Assessment.** General education outcomes represent the common thread of competencies that are attained by students in all programs at BRTC. In other words, they exemplify the knowledge and skills that all BRTC students earning an associate degree or technical certificate are expected to achieve, regardless of their majors. BRTC’s general education outcomes and their definitions are as follows:

1. **Critical Thinking.** A habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

2. **Global Learning.** A critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies and their implications for people’s lives and the earth’s sustainability. Through global learning, students should 1) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, 2) seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and 3) address the world’s most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

3. **Information Literacy.** The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.

4. **Communication.** A prepared, purposeful written or oral presentation designated to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the audience’s attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. Communication involves learning to work in
many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

5. **Quantitative Literacy.** Also known as Numeracy or Quantitative Reasoning – is a “habit of mind,” competency, and comfort in working with numerical data. Individuals with strong QL skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. They understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence, and they can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).

The definitions for the five above-listed outcomes are derived from the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ (AAC&U’s) VALUE rubrics. A group of BRTC representatives worked with HLC scholars at an HLC Assessment Workshop in the Spring of 2017 to modify these five VALUE rubrics to better fit BRTC’s general education goals and expectations. These modified rubrics represent the primary tools used for the assessment of BRTC’s general education outcomes. However, instructors are also encouraged to use the VALUE rubrics for various assessments in their courses and programs, as appropriate.

**Course-Level Assessment**

Course-level outcomes are assessed each semester, with assessment results being documented in the **Course-Level Assessment Data Report (CLADR).** Each instructor (including full-time, adjunct, and concurrent instructors) is responsible for maintaining a CLADR for each course being taught in a given semester, and all CLADRs for a given academic year are placed in full-time instructors’ Professional Teaching Portfolio. CLADRs are also submitted to respective academic deans at the end of each semester, including summer terms, and are archived in Google Drive.

Respective deans audit courses each semester to ensure instructors are participating in assessment processes and are accurately maintaining assessment records. In addition, programs must hold at least one formal faculty meeting each academic year. (NOTE: For programs composed of only one full-time faculty member, that faculty member and his/her respective dean will determine the individuals who should participate in this required meeting. For example, they may determine that adjunct faculty members should be included in the meeting.) One purpose for this meeting is to provide faculty with the opportunity to discuss their assessment data/results and their proposed course revisions with faculty in the same or similar disciplines. Faculty may also use this opportunity for assistance in determining which course revisions to implement. Faculty must document their self-reflection, group reflection, and revisions in their CLADRs, as appropriate.

**Program-Level Assessment**

Each BRTC program has adopted program-level learning outcomes. Program directors or program advisors are responsible for overseeing the program-level assessment process. Program directors are college employees who oversee a program and whose formal title includes the term director. For programs that do not have a formal director, program advisors have been assigned. Program directors and advisors document program learning outcomes assessment using the **Program-Level Assessment Data Report (PLADR).** The PLADR is also used to communicate a program’s assessment schedule, which occurs in three-year cycles. Program directors/advisors determine when they will assess each outcome during an assessment cycle, in accordance with the following guidelines:
• At least one outcome should be assessed each semester.
• All outcomes for an associate-level degree program must be assessed at least once during each three-year cycle.
• Certificate programs (both technical certificates and certificates of proficiency) must assess each outcome at least twice during each three-year cycle.
• PLADRs should be kept current, reflecting all assessment data collected to date.

In addition to maintaining current PLADRs, each program director/advisor is responsible for completing an Annual Program Report, which includes a summary of program faculty reflection on assessment data collected during an academic year as well as plans for continuous improvement. These reports must be submitted to the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation by May 15th of each year.

Finally, every three years, program directors/advisors are responsible for the submission of a Program Self-Study. The Self-Study represents a more comprehensive internal program review process. As with the Annual Program Report, a template for the Self-Study will be provided to guide the review process. The self-studies are placed on a rotating three-year schedule maintained by the Vice President of Academics. The schedule is devised in such a way that a self-study will be due one year prior to a program’s ADHE program review. Such a schedule will allow each program to complete two self-studies prior to the completion of the ADHE program review. The self-studies should be submitted to the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation, the Vice President of Academics, and the chair of the Program Review Committee by May 30th of the respective academic year they are due.

The Program Review Committee is responsible for formal review of all internal and external program reviews, including the College’s 3-year Program Self-Studies and the 7-year program reviews. As a component of this review, the Program Review Committee will meet with the respective dean and the program director/advisor of the program under evaluation to discuss the review and seek clarification, if needed. The Committee will then document the results of their review and forward their report to the Vice President of Academics; the Dean of Assessment & Accreditation; the respective dean for the program being reviewed; the program director/advisor; and all program faculty. A summary of the Program Review Committee’s report and any planned improvements should be included in Part IV of the program’s subsequent Annual Program Report as well as the Program Effectiveness section of the subsequent Program Self-Study.

**General Education Assessment**

The third level of assessment is of general education outcomes. BRTC’s general education outcomes are assessed on a three-year rotation. Two outcomes are assessed each academic year (one each semester) during the first two years, and the fifth outcome is assessed during the fall semester of the third year (see Table 1). The subsequent spring semester is used to recommend changes based upon data analysis and interpretation. A new assessment cycle begins the fall semester following the end of the previous cycle.
Assessment of BRTC’s general education outcomes is based upon the Master General Education Curriculum Map. The Master General Education Curriculum Map was created using curriculum maps from all program directors and advisors that mapped their core programmatic courses to the general education outcomes. Instructors teaching general studies courses also mapped their courses to the general education outcomes. Assessment for each of the general education outcomes occurs in each course for which mastery is indicated on the Master General Education Curriculum Map. To facilitate the general

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gen Ed Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Embedded assignments from randomly-selected sections of BIOL 1004; BIOL 1014; CHEM 1004; CHEM 1021; CHEM 1023; CRIM 1011; CRIM 2013; CRIM 2133; CRIM 2143; EMS 2105; EMS 2203; ENG 1013; ENG 1023; FS 2133; FS 2183; FS 2193; FS 1221; FS 2043; GSP 1004; PHYS 2054; PHYS 2064; PN 1329; PSY 2513; PSY 2523; QM 2113; RES 2207; RNSG 2323; &amp; SOC 2202 assessed with CT Rubric</td>
<td>75% of assessed students will achieve at least a 2.0 average on the CT Rubric.</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Learning</td>
<td>Embedded assignments from randomly-selected sections of ANTH 2233; ENG 2003; ENG 2013; FAV 2503; FS 2193; FS 2043; GEOG 2613; HIST 2013; HIST 1023; SOC 2213; &amp; SPAN 2013 assessed with GL Rubric</td>
<td>75% of assessed students will achieve at least a 2.0 average on the GL Rubric.</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Literacy</td>
<td>Embedded assignments from randomly-selected sections of BIOL 2414; CRIM 1011; CRIM 2133; CRIM 2143; CRIM 2253; ENG 1013; FS 2193; HEC 2203; MEDL 1043; MEDL 1063; PSSC 2811; PSY 2003; PSY 2513; PSY 2523; RES 2303; &amp; SOC 2213 assessed with IL Rubric</td>
<td>75% of assessed students will achieve at least a 2.0 average on the IL Rubric.</td>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Embedded assignments from randomly-selected sections of AGRI 1211; CRIM 1011; CRIM 2133; CRIM 2143; CRIM 2253; ENG 1013; ENG 1023; ENG 1033; ENG 2003; ENG 2013; ENG 2023; ENG 2033; ENG 2113; ENG 2143; ENG 2153; FS 2063; FS 2043; HIST 1013; HIST 1023; HIST 2763; HIST 2773; MEDL 1022; RES 2207; SCOM 1203; SOC 2203; SOC 2213; &amp; SPAN 2013 assessed with Communication Rubric</td>
<td>75% of assessed students will achieve at least a 2.0 average on the Communication Rubric.</td>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Literacy</td>
<td>Embedded assignments from randomly-selected sections of MATH 1023; MATH 1053; MATH 1054; MATH 2204; MATH 2214; MATH 2143; PHYS 2054; PHYS 2064; PN 1329; QM 2113; &amp; RNSG 2318 assessed with QL Rubric</td>
<td>75% of assessed students will achieve at least a 2.0 average on the QL Rubric.</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis & Review

Spring 2020
education assessment process, faculty must have an assignment embedded in their courses through which students have the opportunity to sufficiently demonstrate an identified outcome (i.e., a major project or paper). When these assignments are used for the assessment of general education outcomes, they are called assessment artifacts. The Dean of Assessment and Accreditation coordinates this process and ensures the timely submission of assignments that will serve as assessment artifacts. Faculty teaching courses identified for inclusion in general education outcomes assessment have until the last day of class in a respective semester to submit assessment artifacts to the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation. Submission of artifacts occurs within the General Education Outcomes (GEO) Assessment course in Moodle.

The following semester, the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation assembles Assessment Teams to serve as raters for submitted artifacts. Assessment Teams must successfully complete formal rater training to ensure they are appropriately trained on how to use the general education rubrics and to maximize inter-rater reliability between team members. After training completion, Assessment Teams score all submitted artifacts from the previous semester using the general education rubrics. Each artifact is rated by two team members, with an assignment’s overall score being the average of the two raters’ scores. Raters will be blind to both the student name and the course from which the artifact was derived. The Dean of Assessment and Accreditation will oversee the database for recording assessment ratings/scores and other relevant data.

**Assessment of the Associate of Arts Degree**

Assessment of the Associate of Arts degree does not follow the college’s standard protocol for program-level assessment. The A.A. is designed to allow students to complete their general education courses prior to transferring to another institution of higher education. As such, the A.A. has no discipline-specific core upon which students focus; rather, its curriculum is intentionally broad with the goal of providing the framework for a liberal arts education. Because the goal of the A.A. is to provide students with this strong general education foundation, the learning outcomes and the assessment process for the A.A. mirror the college’s general education assessment plan. Assessment data for the A.A. is gathered in the same way and at the same time that data for the general education outcomes is collected. Data is collected and stored in a way that assessment data from A.A. courses can be disaggregated and analyzed separately.

**Reporting on Assessment**

The processes of academic assessment are valuable only to the extent that resulting data is collected effectively and subsequently utilized appropriately. Thus, the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation will be responsible for preparing annual assessment progress reports that include the following:

- Percent of faculty members participating in course-level assessment
- Percent of programs participating in program-level assessment
- Percent of faculty participating in general education assessment
- Summary of faculty feedback on assessment processes
- Planned changes based on faculty feedback
- Summary of the most common recommendations made to faculty during CLADR and PLADR reviews
- Plans to address the most common recommendations made
- Updates on the general education assessment process, including any data available at the time of report submission
Annual progress reports are to be submitted to the Vice President of Academics by June 30th of each year. After review by the Vice President of Academics, progress reports will be shared with faculty via the BRTC Assessment Resource Center. All planned changes should be implemented in the subsequent academic year.

In addition to annual progress reports, the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation will compose a report at the end of each three-year general education assessment cycle. During the spring semester of the third year of the general education assessment cycle, the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation will prepare a report summarizing the results from the assessment of each of the five general education outcomes. This report will be distributed to all faculty no later than midterm week. Prior to the end of the semester, faculty and academic administration must convene to discuss assessment results and to recommend changes. For all changes that require formal approval, the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation will prepare a proposal on behalf of faculty to be presented to the Curriculum Committee. Any changes that do not require formal approval are to be implemented the following semester.

**Higher Education Accreditation**

**Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE)**

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) serves as the administrative staff for the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB). The Coordinating Board consists of 12 members who are appointed by the governor and serve staggered six-year terms. As part of its responsibilities, the staff develops and implements board policies and procedures. Additionally, the Department reviews academic programs; administers statewide financial aid programs; contracts with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) for support of graduate and first professional study outside of Arkansas; recommends institutional operating, capital, and personal services budgets; and collects and reports on student and course data as part of a statewide data base and academic program inventory for policy studies. The mission of the ADHE is to advocate for higher education; to promote a coordinated system of higher education in the state; and to assist each of the publicly and locally supported institutions of higher education in the state in improving the delivery of higher education services to the citizens of Arkansas.

**Program Accreditation**

In addition to maintaining state and regional accreditation, many of BRTC’s programs are independently accredited and/or approved by third-party agencies. Current program accreditations/approvals are listed below:

- Auto Service Technician Program – National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, Inc. (NATEF)
- Nutrition & Food Service Management Program – Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals (ANFP)
- Nutrition & Dietetics Program – Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition & Dietetics (ACEND)
- Paramedic Program – Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP)
- Practical Nursing Program – Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN)
- Nursing Assistant Program – Department of Human Services, Office of Long-Term Care
- Registered Nursing Program – Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN)
- Respiratory Care Program – Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)
- Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA) – Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards & Training (CLEST)

**The Higher Learning Commission (HLC)**

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), formerly known as the North Central Association (NCA), is an independent corporation that serves as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region of the U.S., which covers 19 states (including Arkansas). By law, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) relies in part on regional accrediting agencies to determine an institution’s eligibility for U.S. government assistance under certain legislation. HLC is required to assure that its member institutions comply with both federal regulations and its own criteria for accreditation, which can be found on the HLC website (www.hlcommission.org). All faculty members are expected to be familiar with HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation and its Assumed Practices. Questions or concerns regarding regional accreditation should be directed to BRTC’s Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO).

**General Policies & Information**

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

BRTC seeks to be in compliance with both the spirit and the letter of the law as stated in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is defined as a person who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities; (2) has a record of such impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities as amended in 2008 include but are not limited to caring for oneself, performing manual task, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. Also included are major bodily functions such as functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, circulatory, respiratory, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, special sense organs and skin, genitourinary, and cardiovascular systems, and reproductive functions. Students seeking ADA accommodations should contact the BRTC ADA Coordinator at P.O. Box 468, Pocahontas, AR, 72455 or by phone at 870-248-4014. Contact must be made two weeks prior to the beginning date of each enrollment period. Faculty seeking disability accommodations should contact the Human Resources Office.

**Campus Security**

Title II of the Crime Awareness, Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires the collection and dissemination of certain information regarding murder, robbery, sex offenses, forcible or non-forcible, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, liquor law violation, drug abuse violation, weapon possessions, arson, and manslaughter. A report must be made/filed with the security officer within 72 hours of its occurrence. Access to campus facilities should be directed to BRTC’s Chief Security Officer at (870) 248-4000, ext. 4034.

Per Policy Number 1190 in BRTC’s Policies and Procedures Manual, college administration, in coordination with authorized local and national agencies, will outline procedures to be followed by all personnel at the college in case of emergency or disaster. Procedures are posted on the student and faculty/staff bulletin boards in the college's main building and in other strategic locations around the campus. A Campus Emergency Management Plan has been developed, and copies are given to all employees. Copies may also be obtained from the Human Resources Office and Campus Security.
Additionally, Policy Number 6145 states that no employee, student, or guest may be in possession of any type of weapon on campus of Black River Technical College unless specifically allowed under ACT 1078 of the Regular Session of the 90th General Assembly, 2015. Further, no employee, student, or guest may bring any intoxicant or harmful/illegal drug onto the campus or appear on campus under the influence of such substances. It is illegal in the state of Arkansas to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use any controlled substance in the school or workplace.

**Classroom & Laboratory Safety**

BRTC faculty and staff must participate in active shooter response training when offered during in-service or as part of an additional required workshop. Should an active shooter be reported on campus, a Rave Alert will be sent indicating suspected shooter presence and the assumed location of the shooter(s) (if known). Instructors are expected to use survival strategies taught during active shooter response training to promote classroom safety during an active shooter event.

Laboratory and workspace safety procedures are the responsibility of the instructor. Each instructor will establish a safety program in labs/areas where students handle dangerous equipment and/or materials. This program will be written, distributed to students, and enforced by the responsible instructor. In case of accident or injury, there is no substitute for good judgment. Accidents of a serious nature should be reported to the Vice President of Academics immediately. The college does not provide medical coverage for students, so if any potentially dangerous activity is to be performed, a student liability waiver must be signed and kept on file by the responsible instructor.

**College Name Usage**

Any polls, questionnaires, interviews, etc. using the name of Black River Technical College/BRTC conducted by a faculty member must have prior approval from the Vice President of Academics.

**Emergency Campus Closing**

When it is necessary to close the college for an emergency situation, students and employees will be notified by college staff and/or the mass media. Information may also appear on the BRTC website. Faculty, staff, and students also have the option of signing up for the Rave Alert messaging system (see the section on the Rave Alert System).

As stated in Policy Number 6144 of the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, the Governor’s Inclement Weather Policy allows the President to close the campus in the event of bad weather. Announcements of closings will be aired on local radio and television stations, and Rave Alerts will be issued. Designated critical personnel will be required to report to work. All other employees are not to report to work on that day, and no leave sheets will be required for the absence.

**Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action**

In accordance with Policy Number 2116 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, the college will provide employment, training, compensation levels, transfer and promotion opportunities, and other aspects of employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other non-job-related characteristic.

2018-2019 Faculty Handbook
When hiring or promotion activity occurs, the college will take affirmative action to seek out qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. At BRTC all terms and conditions of employment are, and will continue to be, established on the basis of the individual’s qualifications and ability to perform the job. The Director of Human Resources is designated as the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator of the college and will be responsible for communicating and implementing this policy.

Gas Card Usage

Occasionally, travel in a college-owned vehicle will require an employee to use a college-issued gas card. For guidelines and instructions on using a gas card, contact the Maintenance Department at (870) 248-4000, ext. 4915.

Grievance Procedure

BRTC’s grievance procedure for employees is outlined in Policy Number 2180 in the *Policies and Procedures Manual*. According to this policy, “Any person aggrieved by any decision or action of the President of the College, an administrator, employee, or group of employees of the College qualified under administrative policies and procedures to pass upon the complaint, shall have the right to proceed through established lines of authority to petition the Board, in writing, to review the action taken in such case. The Board may consider the matter upon such petition or may refer the matter to a committee of the Board. In reviewing such action or decision, the Board may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision or action and may make such orders in connection therewith as may be appropriate under the circumstances.” See Policy 2180 for the grievance procedure.

Nepotism

Per Policy Number 2118 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, relatives may not be employed in any capacity in situations where one relative might be in the line of supervision of another. ["Relative" is defined as father, mother, stepparent, sister, brother, stepsister, stepbrother, half-sister, half-brother, spouse, child, stepchild, grandparents, grandchildren, great grandchildren, aunt, uncle, in-laws (father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law) or any individual acting as a parent or guardian of an employee.]

Political Affiliation & Running for Political Office

BRTC is an institution founded and supported by the total support of the community. It is the belief of the Board that the responsibility of the college in supporting the democratic processes of our society can best be furthered if BRTC employees avoid wearing partisan emblems or taking sides in the classroom or other college forum on candidates, partisan issues, and ballot propositions. This guideline is not intended to limit free and objective discussion of all ballot issues where appropriate, nor is it intended to limit the right of an employee to align him/her in any political activity outside the classroom or college setting. This policy is not intended to limit the right of an employee to be an advisor (and therefore, a partisan member if he/she wishes) of a properly constituted political club.

While active participation in various community and public affairs on the part of employees of the college is not discouraged, it is expected that time given to such activities shall not interfere with the major duties of the employees concerned. Before an employee shall become a candidate for any public office, courtesy dictates that the matter be discussed with the President for proper understanding by all concerned. A
person who decides to run for a political office should consider the following the guidelines set forth in Policy 2159.

**Rave Alert System**

The BRTC Rave Alert System allows employees and students to receive email, text, and voice alerts from BRTC in the event of emergencies and unplanned campus closings. Faculty should log onto the Rave Mobile Safety website at [http://www.getrave.com/login/blackrivertech](http://www.getrave.com/login/blackrivertech) to confirm their contact information and choose notification preferences.

**Service Animals**

BRTC is committed to compliance with State and Federal laws regarding individuals with disabilities. Service animals for employees and students are regulated under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All questions regarding the permissible use of service animals on campus should be directed to the ADA Coordinator.

**Social Media Policy**

Consistent with Policy Number 6235 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, BRTC’s social media presence is to foster the communication of information, thoughts, and experiences through social media and assist the college in providing constituents with current information as well as the ability to communicate with the college. While not included in this policy, individual faculty and staff social media sites are subject to the “Code of Professional Ethics for Faculty and Staff” and other policies which address conduct. When referencing college employment on personal media venues, employees should include a disclaimer noting that their personal opinion is not the opinion of the college.

Official communication originates from the Office of the President and is communicated via the Office of Institutional Advancement. Therefore, all employees should avoid making statements that infer official communication by the college. Employees should refer their audience to those official sources. The college President has assigned the Office of Institutional Advancement with the duty of maintaining and monitoring official College accounts on several social media sites. The Office of Institutional Advancement is responsible for establishing, maintaining, and enforcing BRTC’s social media guidelines. See Policy Number 6235 for guidelines on official college accounts.

**Tobacco Use**

Consistent with the Arkansas Clean Air on Campus Act 734 of 2009 and in keeping with Policy Number 6150 of the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, BRTC is a tobacco-free institution. No tobacco products of any type are permitted on either campus, including any buildings, parking areas, grounds, facilities, vehicles, or streets. Use of tobacco is also prohibited in personal vehicles while on campus. Likewise, BRTC vehicles (i.e., vehicles owned or operated by the college) must remain tobacco-free, regardless of their proximity to campus. Campus police will enforce the provisions of the law, and penalties for violations will be fines in accordance with state law and college regulations (i.e., fines up to $500).

**Travel & Transportation Request Procedures**

Pursuant to Policy Number 3182 in the *BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual*, BRTC employees may request travel away from campus within the following framework:
• The number of employees to be away from the campus at any one time shall be controlled so that no division will be depleted below effectiveness.
• The classes of an employee while he/she is away will be covered normally by other staff members.
• The opportunity to attend conventions and professional meetings will be distributed as broadly as possible.
• The President is authorized to approve travel in the following instances and for the following purposes:
  o To transact business of the college: contact with educational surplus agencies; consider items for procurement; contact with community and governmental groups or agencies when essential; and travel within the college service area.
  o To attend educational and professional meetings: subject matter meetings; educational conventions; professional organizations; conferences and committee meetings.
  o To attend meetings related to legislative matters important to the college: legislative hearings and sessions; committees; and other meetings of organizations working on legislation.
  o To travel with student groups and for student activities: all travel with clubs; field trips; travel to chaperone student activities; and travel to arrange for all such student activities.

Once travel has been approved, BRTC employees may request transportation. Transportation requests are completed online via Dynamic Forms and should be submitted at least five business days prior to the date of travel. To access the online transportation request system, an employee must click on “Transportation Request” on the Forms webpage. The employee will be routed to Dynamic Forms (log-in may be required). Click the “Complete This Form” button to electronically complete the request; then click “Next.” Employees can submit their request after providing an electronic signature and selecting the appropriate supervisor to whom the request should be forwarded.

Travel Reimbursement

Reimbursement for approved travel expenses are made in accordance with State-approved travel regulations and Policy Number 6126 of the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual. State regulations can be accessed via the BRTC forms webpage by clicking on “Travel Regulations.” Policy Number 6126 states that employees shall be reimbursed for authorized personal expenses incurred while on “official” trips away from the college.

In order to request reimbursement, an employee must complete a TR-1 form, which is available in the faculty and staff workroom on the Pocahontas campus. This form must be submitted to the employee’s respective Vice President and then forwarded to the Vice President of Finance for final approval. In the event that travel expenses exceed State-approved limits, a memo from the Vice President of Finance authorizing the expenses will need to be obtained prior to travel.

Pursuant to Policy 6126, when feasible and available, college-owned vehicles should be used rather than private vehicles. Vehicle reservations should be made in advance through the procedures described in the section above.

Vehicle Insurance for BRTC Transportation

In order to operate a state-owned/college-owned vehicle, BRTC employees must agree to participate in the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program. In accordance with the regulations for this program, employees must provide Human Resources with proof of vehicle insurance and a valid driver’s license.
Likewise, the Office of Human Resources is alerted each time an employee receives a ticket so that this information can be maintained in each employee’s personnel file. Employees who accumulate over 24 points on their current Traffic Violation Report are not authorized to operate college-owned vehicles. Contact Human Resources for a copy of the Arkansas State Vehicle Safety Program regulations.

Work Order

Occasionally, faculty may need to request a work order from Distance Education & Instructional Technology, Maintenance, or Computer Services. BRTC has established an online work order request system to expedite the request process and to provide tracking of work order progress. To access the online work order system, faculty must first go to the Forms webpage on the BRTC website. Click on the “Work Orders—Online” link near the bottom of the page. The user will be redirected to the Support Center webpage, where he/she can select “Open a New Ticket” or “Check Ticket Status.” To submit a new work order, click the “Open a New Ticket” option. The New Ticket screen should appear. The user should complete all required fields, clicking “Create Ticket” to submit. To check on the status of a work order at a later time, return to the Support Center webpage and click “Check Ticket Status.”

Leave Policies

Catastrophic Leave

Arkansas Law allows Black River Technical College to establish a Catastrophic Leave Bank Program (CLBP). The Catastrophic Leave Bank Program creates no expectation or promise of continued employment and is intended simply to assist eligible employees during medical emergencies and/or a condition of urgent need for action. Policy Number 6165 of the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual provides additional information and eligibility requirements for catastrophic leave.

Court/Jury Duty Leave

In accordance with Policy Number 6185 of the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, any employee who serves as a witness, juror, or party litigant in any civil or criminal proceeding is entitled to receive normal and full compensation except in personal litigation or when called as a paid expert witness. If the employee provides reasonable notice to the college of the required proceedings, the employee shall not be subject to discharge from employment, loss of annual or sick leave days or accrual rates, or any other form of penalty. Employees who work night shifts and are required to serve in court during the day, shall be allowed to take court and jury leave on the night shift of the day on which they served.

Educational Leave

Per Policy Number 6220 of the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all employees shall be entitled to eight total hours of educational leave, regardless of the number of children, during any one calendar year for the purpose of engaging in and traveling to and from the educational activities or interscholastic activities of a child. Electronic requests for the use of educational leave must be submitted via Colleague. Please see Policy Number 6220 for additional information and stipulations.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, Title 29, Part 825 of the Code of Federal Regulations, became effective August 5, 1993. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take up to twelve (12) weeks paid or unpaid leave each year for specified family and medical reasons. To apply for FMLA leave, contact the Human Resources Office.
Leave Without Pay

Employees may not take leave without pay (LWOP) until all leave has been exhausted LWOP has been approved by the immediate supervisor, except in the case of maternity leave, disciplinary leave without pay, or being elected to a constitutional office. Employees requesting LWOP may be required to submit documentation verifying the reason for LWOP. In the case of disciplinary LWOP, the institution may place an employee in a LWOP status in accordance with the institution’s written and publicized personnel policies. See Policy Number 6175 for additional information.

Professional/Personal Leave

Per Policy Number 4390 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, full-time instructional staff may request two days per academic year (12 hours) to be used for personal business when something comes up that would not be covered by sick leave. These days are to be used only when it is necessary to take care of business that could not be taken care of at any other time; they are not intended to be used for vacation time. The days may be used on an hourly basis or as whole days. This policy is only for instructional staff who do not accumulate vacation time. If these days are not used during the year, they cannot be carried over to the next year and have no bearing on sick leave accumulated or used. The procedure for requesting these days is to submit an electronic request via Colleague. The Vice President of Academics will review and determine approval for all professional leave requests.

Sick Leave

Pursuant to Policy Number 6155 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, any employee who works a minimum of 1,000 hours per year in a regular salary position shall accrue sick leave. Faculty contracted at 30 hours per week earn 3 hours of sick leave per pay period. See Policy 6155 for additional stipulations regarding sick leave accrual and usage. Sick leave is submitted electronically via Colleague.

Sick Leave Incentive Program

As stated in Policy Number 6156 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all classified and non-classified employees will be paid for unused sick leave upon retirement at the discretion of the college if funding is determined to be available. Faculty must have accumulated at least 50 days (300 hours) to be eligible. Compensation will be determined using an established formula. The maximum benefit allowed is $7,500.

Worker’s Compensation

Per Policy Number 6170 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, employees who are absent from work due to a temporary occupational injury or illness and who are entitled to Workers' Compensation benefits may utilize their accrued sick leave as a supplement to such benefits. The combination of Workers’ Compensation benefits and sick leave pay shall not exceed the employee's normal pay period salary. The option will reduce the employee's accrued sick leave on a proportional basis. Consult the Human Resources Office for additional information.

BRTC Employee Benefits

Benefit Options

BRTC offers full-time employees a number of benefit options, including the following: health insurance, life insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, a cafeteria plan option, and various retirement plan options. Employees may also choose from a variety of benefits offered through American Fidelity (e.g.,
cancer insurance, short-term disability, flexible spending accounts, etc.). Finally, all full-time employees may elect to join the Arkansas Federal Credit Union (AFCU), which offers a variety of financial services. Contributions to AFCU are made via payroll deduction. For more information on these benefits, refer to Policy Number 6190 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual or contact the Human Resources Office.

**Gym Privilege**

Per Policy Number 6205 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, full-time employees, current and active members of the Board of Trustees, BRTC Foundation Board, and the spouses or dependents of each of these groups may use the physical education/gym facilities free of charge when they are not in use by the Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA) or by an instructor conducting a class. All persons intending to use the facilities must first sign a Waiver of Liabilities and Injuries Form in Student Affairs.

Adjunct faculty for BRTC may use the facilities during the semester of employment. This shall apply to the employee only and is not for a spouse or dependent.

**Merchant Discounts**

BRTC students and employees are eligible for discounts at various local businesses and restaurants. The merchant discount list is available on the BRTC website at [http://www.blackrivertech.org/current-students/student-life/student-discounts](http://www.blackrivertech.org/current-students/student-life/student-discounts).

**Tuition Waiver**

In accordance with Policy Number 6200 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all full-time employees, their spouses, and their dependent children currently under the age of 24 are exempt from payment of tuition for courses at BRTC. Likewise, adjunct faculty current teaching credit courses for BRTC are eligible for a tuition waiver during the semester of employment. The tuition waiver is limited to equal the number of semester credit hours taught during the semester. This waiver shall apply to the employee only and is not for a spouse or children. Fees are not included in this waiver.

Waiver applications must be filled out for each term that a waiver is being requested. Eligibility for waiver will be determined based on birth date or marriage status in relation to the first day of class for the semester in which a waiver is being requested. Anyone with a bachelor’s degree or higher who applies for a tuition exemption must obtain approval from their respective Vice President to obtain tuition exemption. The decision will be based upon, but not limited to the following: 1) benefit to the college and 2) enhancement of job duties and/or responsibilities.

**Wellness Program**

According to Policy Number 6225 in the BRTC Policies and Procedures Manual, all employees are allowed 30 minutes per day to participate in a wellness program in lieu of taking breaks. The 30 minute wellness program will not be allowed during the summer when the college is observing the four ten hour days work schedule. Faculty who choose to participate in the wellness program should indicate all scheduled wellness time on their office hours. Wellness time for faculty cannot exceed 30 minutes per day and no more than a total of 2 hours per week.
Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct Faculty Contracts

All adjunct faculty are required to sign an adjunct contract at the beginning of the semester during which he/she is employed. This contract (along with other information required by the Human Resources Office) must be signed and returned to the Vice President of Academics before the first paycheck is issued.

Adjunct Faculty Qualifications

Adjunct faculty are subject to the same credentialing requirements as full-time faculty. For a description of these requirements, see the section on Faculty Qualifications/Credentials.

Adjunct/Overload Salary

Adjunct instructors are typically paid per course based on the number of credit-hours students earn in the course. The current rate-of-pay is $500 per credit-hour.

Re-assignment of Adjunct Classes to Full-Time Faculty

The Vice President of Academics is responsible for making all adjunct faculty appointments. Typically, a qualified full-time instructor will be given the opportunity to teach a course prior to seeking an adjunct. Likewise, a course initially assigned to an adjunct instructor may be re-assigned to a full-time faculty member at the discretion of the Vice President of Academics.

Concurrent Faculty

Overview of BRTC’s Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP)

The meaning of the term concurrent education varies widely from institution to institution. BRTC’s definition of concurrent enrollment as described in Policy 7116 is “a college-credit bearing course taught to high school students by college-approved high school teachers or by BRTC faculty if the high school does not have a credentialed or credential-seeking instructor.” Only high school students can earn both high school and college credit for satisfactorily completing a concurrent course. Concurrent courses are college-level courses that meet the same institutional standards required for accreditation. BRTC’s Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP) refers to the conglomerate of concurrent courses offered at several high schools within the college’s service area. BRTC’s current CEP includes partnerships with high schools in the following school districts: Corning, Hoxie, Maynard, Marmaduke, Piggott, Pocahontas, Ridgefield Christian, Rector, Sloan-Hendrix, and Walnut Ridge. Concurrent courses may be offered via online delivery, providing that the high school offers at least one face-to-face course taught by a high school faculty member. BRTC’s concurrent enrollment program is accredited by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE).

Note that BRTC distinguishes between concurrent education and dual enrollment, or dual credit, opportunities. Per Policy 7125, Black River Technical College administration may enter into partnerships with area high schools to offer dual credit courses. Such partnerships should only be made when the arrangement is mutually beneficial to the students and institutions represented within the agreement. Per the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, dual credit courses are defined as college-credit bearing courses for which high school students earn college-level credit. However, partnering high
schools may elect to provide high school-level credit as well. Black River Technical College dual credit courses will be offered face-to-face or online via BRTC’s learning management system. Dual credit courses are taught by credentialed BRTC faculty and are equivalent to traditional BRTC courses in rigor, expectations for student learning, and access to learning resources. Likewise, equivalency must be demonstrated in learning outcomes and outcomes achievement. While BRTC also provides many dual enrollment opportunities to local high school students, this section of the handbook applies specifically to high school faculty who are teaching concurrent enrollment courses.

The decision to offer concurrent courses is dependent upon the availability of qualified faculty at participating high schools through which a formal CEP partnership has been established. Any BRTC course may be offered via concurrent education, provided appropriate classroom facilities and technology exists. Contact Darenda Kersey, the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment, for a current list of CEP courses.

All concurrent courses are officially BRTC courses. As such, concurrent courses must be developed by BRTC faculty and approved by institutional committees, as required by BRTC policies and procedures. No distinction is made between the on-campus, traditionally-taught course and its concurrent counterpart; the course title, course number, course description, and learning outcomes are the same. Thus, each concurrent course curriculum must include the same content and meet the same level of rigor as the corresponding on-campus course. To assist in meeting this goal, CEP instructors must meet the following guidelines:

- CEP instructors must use the approved college course syllabus. They must also submit a copy of their syllabus each semester to the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment.
- CEP instructors must use a college-approved textbook(s) and/or course.
- CEP instructors must use the approved course learning outcomes and assignments to guide their instruction.
- CEP courses should reflect the same pedagogical, theoretical, and philosophical orientation as their traditional BRTC course counterparts.*
- CEP instructors must participate in BRTC’s assessment program, including measuring student achievement of course learning outcomes and documenting assessment processes within required forms.
- CEP instructors must use the course grading standards as outlined in this handbook and adopted by college faculty.
- CEP instructors must verify their class rosters to ensure all students are properly enrolled.
- CEP instructors must meet all deadlines set by the Registrar’s Office for submitting no-shows, midterm grades, final grades, and last days of attendance.
- CEP instructors must permit BRTC faculty and/or staff to visit their classrooms for periodic evaluation and review, including distribution and collection of student evaluations.
- CEP instructors must participate in required professional development activities, training, and orientation sessions presented by BRTC faculty and staff.

*According to NACEP, “course philosophy relates to what concepts, theories, and skills a department emphasizes in its curriculum, while pedagogy focuses on how the material is taught and learned.”
Concurrent Faculty Contracts

Concurrent faculty are required to sign a concurrent faculty contract prior to the beginning of the semester during which he/she is teaching a concurrent course for BRTC. This contract (along with other information that may be required by the Human Resources Office and/or Academic Affairs) must be signed and returned to the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment.

Concurrent Faculty Qualifications

Concurrent faculty are subject to the same credentialing requirements as full-time faculty. For a description of these requirements, see the section on Faculty Qualifications/Credentials.

New CEP Instructors

Approval for a high school instructor to serve as a CEP instructor requires submission of the following documents to BRTC’s Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment:

- A completed Concurrent Enrollment Instructor Application
- Current curriculum vita or resume
- Official college transcript(s)

The above documents must be received no later than midterm week of the semester prior to which the CEP instructor candidate intends to teach a CEP course. Approval to teach a concurrent course comes from the Vice President of Academics. An instructor will receive a letter from the Vice President of Academics indicating approval or denial to teach no later than the last week of the semester prior to the CEP course offering.

Concurrent Orientation and Professional Development

All newly-hired CEP instructors must attend a New Instructor Orientation prior to teaching a concurrent course for BRTC. New Instructor Orientation provides CEP instructors with discipline-specific training and general orientation regarding their course curriculum, assessment criteria and guidelines, pedagogy, course philosophy, and administrative responsibilities and procedures. CEP instructors will work with their respective faculty liaisons, who will provide all course-related aspects of the orientation.

In addition to New Instructor Orientation, all current CEP instructors must attend concurrent education professional development workshops hosted by BRTC. Professional development workshops are held at least once annually at the BRTC-Pocahontas location and are led by CEP staff and faculty liaisons. The overall purpose of this professional development is to provide annual opportunities for collegial interaction between CEP instructors and campus faculty and to ensure that CEP instructors are updated on changes in curriculum or pedagogy. CEP instructor attendance at all professional development events is documented by the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment and reported to the Vice President of Academics. Instructors who do not attend the required professional development risk losing the privilege of teaching for the BRTC Concurrent Education Program. See the “Non-compliance Statement” section for more information.
Concurrent Faculty Liaisons

BRTC will assign a faculty liaison to each CEP instructor. Faculty liaisons serve as mentors and monitors for CEP instructors and their courses. Faculty liaisons are appointed by the respective academic dean and serve as an important link between BRTC’s high school partners and the college community. The liaison is expected to communicate regularly with the CEP instructor and is responsible for monitoring assignments, exams, projects, student academic achievement, and instructional effectiveness to ensure the concurrent course is equivalent to its on-campus counterpart. Specific faculty liaison responsibilities are outlined below:

- Liaisons must ensure that CEP instructors are using the adopted course syllabus and that the syllabus template is completed correctly. Concurrent course materials and textbooks should also be reviewed to ensure academic standards for curriculum content and academic rigor are being upheld. Academic deans may also participate in this review.
- Liaisons must ensure that CEP instructors adhere to the submitted syllabi for assigned courses, including ensuring that student learning outcomes are addressed through classroom instruction, activities, and assignments.
- Liaisons must ensure that CEP instructors participate in BRTC’s assessment program, including the submission of required assessment artifacts and/or assessment forms.
- Liaisons must ensure that grading scales for both the high school course and its equivalent college course are consistent. While some assignments and test values may vary, the corresponding BRTC course grading scale must be utilized.
- Concurrent instructors must provide evidence that they are adhering to the above guidelines, as requested by faculty liaisons and/or academic deans.
- A BRTC representative (i.e., faculty liaison, academic dean, or the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment) must complete at least one site visit to the concurrent instructor’s classroom each academic year. Observations should include monitoring of NACEP standards and HLC criteria for accreditation, as well as ensuring consistent course content and academic rigor. A signed and dated observation form is required to document all site visits.
- Specific site visit guidelines and forms are provided by the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment.
- Liaisons must work directly with assigned concurrent instructors during college orientation and professional development sessions, as required.

In addition to faculty liaisons, concurrent faculty should interact frequently with their respective academic dean and the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment. The dean and/or the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment will provide important information and deadlines to concurrent faculty, including deadlines set by the Registrar’s Office for the submission of grades and no-shows.

Non-compliance Statement

CEP instructors are expected to follow all requirements and directives outlined within this Handbook. If one or more of these requirements are not met annually, the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment and/or respective academic dean will discuss with the CEP instructor the steps needed to correct the problem and come into compliance. If the steps are not taken to correct identified problems within a specified timeline, the CEP instructor will not be approved to teach the CEP course for at least one calendar year from the date of non-compliance. For detailed procedures, please contact the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment. A record of all instances of non-compliance will be maintained by the Coordinator of Concurrent Enrollment.
Student Requirements for Enrollment in BRTC’s Concurrent Enrollment Program

Students interested in enrolling in a concurrent course offered at their respective high schools must meet the following requirements:

- Students must be enrolled in an Arkansas public school that has entered into a formal concurrent enrollment partnership with BRTC.
- Students must have completed the 8th grade.
- Students must provide a score of 19 or higher on the Reading, English, and Math sections of the ACT (or an equivalent Accuplacer score).
- Students must be recommended by their high school principal, superintendent, or counselor.
- Combined high school and concurrent enrollments must not exceed what is considered a normal academic load.

Students enrolled in a concurrent course receive a tuition and fees discount. Student tuition and fees are due upon registration. Students are dropped for non-payment on the 11th day of classes (according to the BRTC calendar, NOT the high school calendar).

Some BRTC courses have course prerequisites. All prerequisites are published in the College Catalog, and concurrent students must meet the same prerequisite requirements as all other BRTC students. Both the Coordinator for Concurrent Education and the BRTC Registrar’s Office verify the attainment of course prerequisites prior to the beginning of the concurrent course. If a student has not attained the required prerequisites by the first day of the concurrent course, he/she will be unenrolled from the course, and a refund for any paid tuition and fees will be issued.
Paragould Location
1 Black River Drive
Paragould, AR 72450
870-239-0969

Paragould Facilities
1 Academic Complex - North Wing
2 Academic Complex - South Wing
3 Welding
4 Math Center
5 Maintenance

Student Parking Lot
Visitor's Parking Lot
Staff Parking Lot