General Principles to Guide Review of TCM Education Program with Online Learning Components

Date: 2023-10-05

Introduction

During the Covid pandemic, the CTCMA enacted a temporary acceptance of online course delivery as a way to facilitate the delivery of education programs while in person classroom delivery was not advised or not possible. This temporary measure has now lapsed (30 June 2023) and the original policy on online course delivery has come back into effect, which only permits the online delivery of courses for satisfaction of the 2-year university-level prerequisite credits. The temporary measure was taken in response to a global pandemic, required timely intervention, and was done without education program review of these changes.

Background

The implementation of online learning (synchronous or asynchronous), digital resources, virtual reality, and other such adjuncts to in-person learning should be done **with the intention of enriching the learning experience, not simply replacing in-person delivery**. It is important to consider the strengths and limitations of each format of course delivery, including but not limited to the student experience (mental health, isolation support network), expected professional competency and risk to public safety, as well as the adherence to curriculum mapping and stepwise development of the learning process.

Any planned curriculum and/or program changes, including the delivery method of any course, must go through the consent and approval processes as outlined by the Education Program Review (EPR) and the appropriate governmental ministry/agency, the Private Training Institutions Branch (PTIB), as prescribed under the Registration Committee's Distance Learning Policy.

This document outlines the general principles that TCM training programs must be able to demonstrate to address and account for in their submitted documents for EPR approval in order to get approvals. The left column outlines the principles that should be included in the new policy, and the right column covers the potential evidence that demonstrates the criteria has been met.

Applications of the General Principles

The principles of this document cover education program review of:

1. a current recognized TCM program wishes to change the delivery of its approved curriculum to have some courses to be delivered online.
2. a new curriculum, that is being reviewed in the Education Program Review (EPR) as a NEW program, consists of courses to be delivered online.

Please note that while technology, including recorded videos, sound, pictures, photos might already be used in the regular in-person classroom instruction, this document covers the situation when a course in a training program is to be delivered online virtually.

If a recognized TCM program has change(s) to the curriculum, such as course hours and content, learning outcomes, course sequences, etc, those are considered curriculum changes that need a regular Education Program Review to be approved, those changes are not covered by this guiding document.

Terminologies

Online (virtual) learning / instruction / education

A type of educational instruction delivery method using the internet. It means that students do not gather in-person at a physical classroom location to meet the instructor for face to face instruction during each class session in a course. Students and instructors connect in a virtual environment during class.

Synchronous learning

It refers to instructors and students gathering at the same time and (virtual or physical) place and interacting in "real-time**".** Examples: live-streaming lectures, video-conferencing discussions, in-person sessions

Asynchronous learning

It refers to students accessing materials at their own pace and interacting with each other over longer periods. Examples: watching pre-recorded lectures, reading assigned materials, participating in discussion boards / forums.

Hybrid or Blended Learning

Learning experiences that falls along a spectrum of synchronous-to-asynchronous experiences. Examples: combining assigned self paced learning with in-person group discussions and/or instruction; some courses in a program are delivered in- person and some online; a course is delivered both in-person and online for some classes, enabling students the ability to be in person or attend virtually; completing an assigned task prior to the engagement in a scheduled synchronous session in which discussion of the assigned task is required of the group.

Principles

Areas	Principle	Evidence
Program: Curriculum continues to meet EPR requirements.	Programs must continue to meet and comply with Requirements for Education Programs as outlined in Schedule E.	- Program hours - Curriculum that continues to demonstrate teaching according to the Entry-level Occupational Competency Profile's competencies, performance indicators, domains of learning - Course syllabus / outline, learning objectives, evaluation rubrics, curriculum sequence, including pre-requisites, co-requisites, sequential skill and knowledge development, etc - Clinical training guidelines - Clinic attendance records
Program: Curriculum achieves learning objectives	Comprehensive course syllabi are available for each course, along with evaluation rubrics for all exams, quizzes, and assignments.	- Course syllabi - Sample lesson plans and corresponding evaluation tools - Licensing exam performance - Graduates' surveys
Program: Mandatory In-person clinical and practical components	Clinical and practical/lab courses are offered in-person.	Practical/lab component courses may be recorded for playback of technique demonstrations and enrichment via interesting case studies. This does not replace nor can be counted towards clinical training hours as required for minimum Requirements for Education Programs (CTCMA bylaws Schedule E).
Program: Best Practices for Learning	Course content, whether in person or online, is delivered based on evidence-informed best practice, and adult	If the course has been offered online during the past three years, school conducts review comparing in person to online delivery with respect to competency of students and the feedback from students and instructors to

	education and learning principles.	• monitor program performance. • Reference best practice sources to support update to course content and delivery changes • Course evaluations • Licensing exam performance • Graduation surveys • Course sequencing, curriculum progression, pre-requisites vs co-requisites are planned and implemented for best students' learning outcomes
Program: Accessibility to Students	Considerations should be given to accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that all learners can fully participate and benefit from the technology.	• Recordings available • Office hours for instructor or teaching assistants • Course evaluations
Program: Valid, reliable Assessments and Attendance Tracking	Using methods to record and monitor authentic attendance and effective valid and reliable assessments	• Institution must have attendance policy and method for implementation including remedial actions and/or impact to course's final grade due to low or no participation • Utilize Learner Management Software to assist online instruction: For example, Moodle, Canvas, Avenue to Learn, D2L, Blackboard Learn etc. • Plagiarism detection software should be used to ensure that students are submitting original work. For example, Copyleaks, Grammarly, PlagiarismCheck etc. • Proctoring software or equivalent measures should be utilized: Meazure Learning (Yardstick and Proctor U combined)
Instructors: Qualifications	Instructors, whether in person or online, must meet	• Instructor resume • CTCMA registration in good standing

	qualifications as outlined by PTIB and CTCMA.	• Course instructor list
		
		   ○ Course instructors are responsible for assessments and evaluations of student's progress, hold discussion hours and office hours for students. They must be BC registrants in good standing, tutoring students, responsible for the students in the class.
		
		   ○ Guest lecturers can present to students to share their knowledge on a subject, but they do not solely evaluate students. These guest lecturers can be qualified health professionals not registered in BC, but their experience and knowledge are relevant to the subject taught.

Instructors: Training	Instructors must be trained specifically for online teaching methods and software.	• Evidence of instructor training
Instructors: Ratios	Ensure that the chosen instructor to student ratio aligns with the online resources and, course objectives and can be implemented effectively.	• Examples of lesson plans • Course evaluations and reviews • Correspondence with curriculum map, learning objectives, and assessments
Students: Active Participation & Engagement	Online courses, whether synchronous or asynchronous, emphasize and enable interaction and participation among students and with the instructor or teaching assistant.	• This may include: virtual meetings, discussion boards, group projects, presentations, case studies, and working groups • Instructors or teaching assistants hold office hours that are accessible to students

Students: Protection of Student's Privacy	Online delivery complies with Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Personal Information Protection Act, as appropriate.	• Utilize Learner Management Software: For example, Moodle, Canvas, Avenue to Learn, D2L, Blackboard Learn etc. • Policy that outlines legal rights and collection of information and privacy
Students: Services and Support	Sufficient information technology resources and technical support are available to meet faculty and student needs.	• Virtual library • Institution subscriptions to online resources (journals, case studies, etc) • Teaching resources specific to online instruction available to instructors e.g., tips for teaching online, IT teaching resources etc. • "Classroom" resources available to both online or in-person students • Student support services and other administrative services are available to students when they are enrolling in online leaning and are not present at the school's premise