

M50 Faculty FAQs

Answers to Frequently-Asked-Questions by FCBE faculty who teach online.

Question: What is an “M50” course?

Answer: An “M50” course is the general name for any fully online course offered by the University of Memphis as part of the eCampus initiative developed through Extended Programs. For online courses in this category, the section number is always a derivative of “M5x” (M50, M51, M52, etc.) Any course falling into the M50 category is eligible for the \$100 per credit hour fee paid to the academic unit offering the course. A predecessor to the “M50” term was “U50” which identified the same types of courses, but is no longer in active use on campus. Additionally, there are “400” courses on campus that are classified by the Registrar as fully online, but they are not a part of the official ecampus initiative and are not eligible for the \$100 per credit hour fee assessment.

Question: What is the process for an “M50” course to be developed and put into the official eCampus program?

Answer: All M50 courses must be approved through a process involving both Extended Programs and the individual academic department seeking to offer a new M50 course. Part of that process is the generation of a contract that is executed between Extended Programs and the local academic area and identifies a specific faculty member (or team of faculty members) who will be responsible for developing the course consistent with eCampus guidelines. Generally, this contract also includes a one-time payment of \$4,000 paid by Extended Programs to the academic unit once the course is completed and has passed a final review process defined by Extended Programs.

Question: Who sets the rules for organization and structure of approved M50 courses?

Answer: The University of Memphis places a very high value on the quality of all courses offered through the M50 program and, as such, has employed a rigorous process of quality assurance that all accepted M50 courses must successfully pass through before being offered to students. For M50 courses in the Fogelman College, there are two layers of quality assurance. At the top level there are the guidelines and approval review procedures established and administered by Extended Programs. Additionally, the FCBE has established its own set of quality standards that are defined and administered at the college level. All FCBE M50 courses must meet both sets of standards.

Question: How are the FCBE level quality standards established and administered?

Answer: The Fogelman College has employed a full-time professional (Sandy Schaeffer) to help lead the college's effort to raise the overall quality of its fully online programs. In addition, the college has an established internal governance process (Departmental Online Standards Committees) that is charged with identifying areas of "best practice" for adoption by the FCBE in its fully online programs. All academic departments (ACCT, ECON, FIR, MGMT, MIS, MKTG-SCMS) are represented. Collectively, these internal college resources are working together to create a locally-developed quality framework that best serves the needs of the Fogelman College faculty and students. All locally-applied quality standards adopted within the FCBE must be vetted and approved through the Departmental Online Standards Committees representatives.

Question: Who "owns" an officially contracted M50 course and its content?

Answer: An officially contracted M50 course is jointly owned by the University of Memphis and the faculty-developer and/or academic unit (depending upon the employment contract of the specific faculty-developer). In the example of a full-time tenure / tenure-track faculty member, the intellectual property that constitutes a given M50 course (structure, organization, content objects, activities, etc.) is co-owned by both the faculty developer and the university. The faculty-developer could choose to leave the university and take a copy of their M50 course for potential reuse at a different institution. Additionally, the university retains the right to continue using the developed course independent of the faculty-developer's status with the university.

Question: What technology am I required to use to teach a fully online course in the M50 program for the FCBE?

Answer: eCourseware (Desire2Learn) is the official LMS (Learning Management System) for the UoM campus as well as all of TBR. All M50 courses must be taught using eCourseware as the central access and delivery system for all students. External systems offered by IT Services or other approved third party systems may be used for managing various specialized learning needs, but the access point for all students to those external systems must be the main course housed on eCourseware. Examples of the former (UoM IT Services) include library services or specialized digital media services (Ensemble Video, Mediasite, Podcast Central, etc.) Examples of the latter might include eTextbook and assessment systems provided by major Publishers (Cengage, Pearson, McGraw-Hill, etc.) Use of any other LMS or similar delivery system for a student's primary access to an M50 section is not allowed.

Question: How much of a course's content must be kept on eCourseware?

Answer: As previously noted, eCourseware is the standard delivery system for students to take a fully online M50 course offered by the University of Memphis. As such, all of the course structure and content must be developed and stored directly in the associated eCourseware space for that course. The only exception to that rule is for specialized content (media, podcasts, publishers systems, etc.) as previously described. Use of personal/private storage services including GoogleDrive, Dropbox, Screencast, etc. for storage and delivery of primary course content is not allowed. This restriction also includes private/personal space on campus-supplied services such as UMDrive. Faculty may decide to use such unsupported or personal services for temporary or development purposes, but the official repository for all M50 course content is eCourseware (D2L) or selected external services as previously noted.

Question: Why does it matter where the course content is maintained? (Similarly, why is it not OK for me to keep course content on Dropbox, Screencast, or a personal/private UMdrive folder?)

Answer: As previously noted, any contracted (thereby "official") M50 course is considered the property of the University of Memphis eCampus program and, as such, the campus must be able to readily access and archive any and all components that constitute a course. Content maintained on external or private systems that do not have an official relationship with the campus (e.g., Dropbox or Screencast) puts the campus in a precarious situation with respect to accessing course content built for that M50 program. Thus, anything that is part of an M50 course must be maintained on a service that is legally accessible to the campus independent of the faculty-developer.

Additional FAQs

Question: How are the fees different for students enrolling in M50 sections?

Answer: Students enrolled in M50 sections pay the same basic tuition (maintenance) fees as they would for a lecture class, but they do not pay Technology Access Fees (TAF) or other co-curricular fees (athletic tickets, etc.) as traditional “on-ground” students pay. However, M50 students pay an online fee of \$100 per credit hour that is assessed by the Registrar and collected by the Bursar’s office. The net total cost for a class is approximately the same for most students. Those online fees are transferred to the academic area offering the M50 course for local use. Note that graduate assistantship scholarships have not traditionally covered the online fee which may result in additional out-of-pocket costs for graduate students on GA contracts who register for M50 courses.