

Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges

Academics

POLICY NAME: Design and Delivery of Distance Education Courses

POLICY NUMBER: 4730

A. PURPOSE

To encourage the development and use of distance education courses for educational purposes, where appropriate, while ensuring a level of quality equivalent to that of regular on-campus courses.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Blended Course:** Instruction is simultaneously delivered to two (2) separately registered groups of students enrolled in the same course at one (1) specific College: online students and students who receive instruction face to face in the classroom. In a blended course, the Internet from one (1) or more remote locations. Students attending remotely receive instruction synchronously (or through a recording of that particular live session) with the students in the classroom during set class meeting times. A blended course has a single syllabus and a common set of assignments, schedule, and curriculum.
- 2. Distance Education:** Education that uses one (1) or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously.¹
- 3. Hybrid Course:** Instruction is offered to all students via dual modalities of on-campus and online. One (1) or more face-to-face class meetings are required in addition to participating in online instructional activities. No more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the instruction and interactions occurs via electronic communication or equivalent mechanisms, with faculty and students physically separated from each other. Instruction may be offered synchronously or asynchronously.

¹<https://www.hlcommission.org/General/glossary.html>

4. **On-Campus Course:** Instruction is primarily delivered in an onsite, face-to-face setting with both instructor and students together in the same place at the same time for scheduled class meetings. Course may include Internet enhancements.
5. **Online Course:** Instruction is primarily delivered online via the Internet, where at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the instruction and interactions occurs via electronic communication or equivalent mechanisms, with faculty and students physically separated from each other. Instruction may be offered synchronously or asynchronously.

C. POLICY

1. Procedures

- 1.1. The Chancellor will encourage, facilitate and coordinate the distance education activities of the Nebraska State Colleges by reviewing plans, monitoring progress, and evaluating results as specified under the current policy.
- 1.2. The Colleges will determine the modality of distance education courses based upon the definitions provided below for blended courses, hybrid courses, and online courses.

2. Standards and Conditions

- 2.1. Courses offered via distance education may be designed and delivered differently than on-campus courses, following best practices for instruction, engagement, and assessment of students using this modality. Course outcomes for distance education courses must be equivalent to those established for on-campus courses.
- 2.2. Instructors assigned to courses offered via distance education must complete training specific to the modality and demonstrate continued effectiveness in using distance education to deliver instruction.
- 2.3. Instructors responsible for courses offered via distance education must meet the standards and procedures used by the College for the appointment of faculty responsible for on-campus courses. Provision must be made for the review and approval of faculty credentials by the appropriate administrator in the field(s) affected.
- 2.4. Procedures for evaluation of faculty responsible for courses offered via distance education must be equivalent to those used by the College for the evaluation of faculty teaching on-campus courses.
- 2.5. Procedures for the evaluation of courses offered via distance education must be equivalent to those used for on-campus courses.

- 2.6. Each course offered via distance education must include procedures for monitoring and assessing student performance. Those procedures, such as written exercises, papers, and examinations, must be equivalent to those used in comparable on-campus courses. Standards for success or failure in distance education courses must be as rigorous as those for on-campus courses.
- 2.7. The Colleges have the responsibility to verify the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided via distance education, as required by Federal Policy FDCR.A.10-050.²
- 2.8. Each instructor of record in a course offered via distance education must provide timely feedback to students regarding their progress and performance by methods equivalent to those used in on-campus courses.
- 2.9. Students enrolled in distance education courses must be provided with academic support services appropriate to the discipline.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

Policy Adopted: June 1993

Policy Revised: June 2006, March 2010, November 2013, July 2021

²<https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/verification-of-student-identity.html>