

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION**References:**

Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.
34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 602.17 (U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended);
ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.1

Definition

Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by time and/or distance and interact through the assistance of technology. An “online” distance education course uses the District-supported Learning Management System with no face-to-face or on-campus requirements. Any distance education course that requires students to attend on-campus orientations, assessments, scheduled class meetings, or other required activities is a “partially online” course.

Authentication

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

The District shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the students' identity:

- secure credentialing/login and password;
- proctored examinations; or
- new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

Course Approval

Each new or existing course to be provided through distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. If any portion of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided through distance education, an addendum to the official course outline of record shall be required.

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The review and approval of new and existing courses offered through distance education shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in AP 4020 titled Program and Curriculum Development.

When approving courses to be offered through distance education, the Curriculum Committee will certify the following:

- **Course Quality Standards:** The same standards of course quality are applied to any portion of a class conducted through distance education as are applied to in-person classes. Areas that are part of the Distance Education Review process include, but are not limited to:
 - Student Access to Resources
 - Student Services
 - Intervention and Remediation Recommendations
 - Test Security
 - Academic Integrity
- **Course Quality Determinations:** Determinations and judgments about the quality of the course offered through distance education are made with the full involvement of the Curriculum Committee.
- **Instructor to Student Interaction** Any portion of a course through distance education includes instructor-initiated regular substantive interaction between instructor and students either synchronously or asynchronously, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, voicemail, e-mail, or other activities.
- **Student to Student Interaction:** Faculty will ensure opportunities for ongoing regular and effective student-to-student contact. Best practices include, but are not limited to, implementing communication means for varied types of interaction in the course design, assigning and monitoring weekly assignments and projects that promote collaboration among students, posing questions in the discussion boards that encourage critical thinking skills and promote interaction, and monitoring student engagement to ensure that students participate with depth.
- **Accessibility Standards:** Electronic course materials, e-textbooks, websites, and course packs must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S. Code Section 794d, and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
 - Instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.)

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and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S. Code Section 794d), and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Distance education courses, materials, and resources must be designed and delivered in such a way that the level of communication and course-taking experience is the same for students with or without disabilities. Distance education resources must generally be designed to provide “built-in” accommodation (i.e. closed captioning, descriptive narration) and/or interface design/content layout, which is accessible to “industry standard” assistive computer technology in common use by persons with disabilities.

Faculty Online Certification: Validation of preparedness or certification of faculty to teach online shall be determined in at least one of the following ways:

1. Evidence of successful completion of Faculty Senate-approved distance education pedagogy workshops.
2. Evidence of coursework, certificates, and/or degrees that focus on online teaching which were completed at other accredited higher education institutions.
3. Evidence of a successful course design and facilitation as demonstrated by alignment with the criteria approved by the Faculty Senate

List of Certified Online Faculty: Evidence is collected by the Distance Education (DE) Coordinator with assistance from the Distance Education Committee. The DE Coordinator ensures all faculty who have satisfied the certification requirements are added to the college’s comprehensive list of certified online instructors.

Prior to assigning an online course, department chairs or deans will consult the list of certified online instructors each term to ensure that faculty have met at least one of the three requirements-

An exception could be made in emergency situations that require late instructor assignments, whereby the course could be assigned to an instructor not yet on the certified list with the understanding that an early and ongoing effort will be made to get the instructor qualified to be on the list during that semester.

Maintaining DE Currency: To ensure that faculty are kept current with any changes/recommendations in online course design requirements, prior to the start of each semester, the DE Coordinator will distribute to all faculty teaching online the criteria approved by the Faculty Senate for online course design and facilitation, and a list of online teaching resources.

Office of Primary Responsibility: Faculty Senate and Instruction Office