

Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges

Academics

POLICY NAME: Design and Delivery of Distance Education Courses and Programs

POLICY NUMBER: 4730

A. PURPOSE

To encourage the development and use of distance education courses and programs for educational purposes, where appropriate, while ensuring a level of quality equivalent to that of regular on-campus courses and to establish consistent processes for student enrollments in licensure/certification programs offered via distance education.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Admitted Student:** A student who has completed all requirements for admission to the College.
2. **Attending Student:** A student who is currently completing one or more courses at the College.
3. **Student Attestation:** A formal process for students to acknowledge their desire to complete a licensure/certification program from a location outside of Nebraska that is designated as a Not-Meets state or territory.
4. **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, there are students physically attending in the classroom as well as students attending via 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.
5. **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

6. **Distance Education Program:** A program for which all the required coursework for program completion is able to be completed via distance education.
7. **Distance Education Student:** A student who is enrolled in one or more distance education courses during a semester.
8. **“Does Not Meet” State or Territory:** A state or territory for which the licensure/certification program has been determined to not fully meet the educational requirements for licensure/certification.
9. **Enrolled Student:** A student who has completed all requirements for registration and has added one or more courses to their official schedule.
10. **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.
11. **“Meets” State or Territory:** A state or territory for which the licensure/certification program has been determined as fully meeting the educational requirements for licensure/certification.
12. **Notification:** A written communication relaying information about a program to a student, with no expectation for response or agreement.
13. **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.
14. **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.
15. **Student Location:** The state or territory in which the attending student will physically reside when courses begin.
16. **Licensure/Certification Program:** Any program offered by the College to fully meet the educational requirements for state licensure or certification.

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

C. POLICY

1. Roles & Responsibilities

1.1. System

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. Colleges

The President and Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs will determine the modality of distance education courses based upon the definitions provided above for blended courses, hybrid courses, and online courses.

2. Standards and Conditions

2.1. Course Requirements & Standards

- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- Students enrolled in distance education courses must be provided with academic support services appropriate to the discipline.

2.2. Instructor Requirements

- 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.
- Instructors responsible for courses offered via distance education must meet the standards and procedures used by the College for the

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

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.

- 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.

2.3. Evaluation Procedures

- 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.
- Procedures for the evaluation of courses offered via distance education must be equivalent to those used for on-campus courses.

3. Licensure/Certification Program Processes

The following processes are based upon U.S. Department of Education requirements for all licensure/certification programs offered by a State College to retain Title IV status. Each State College shall establish procedures to ensure these processes are implemented.

3.1. Identification and Disclosure of States and Territories

- For each licensure/certification program offered by the College, the College will clearly post on its website all U.S. states and territories where the program fully “Meets” the educational requirements for licensure or certification. Colleges may also list any states or territories where they have confirmed the program “Does Not Meet” licensure requirements. For any states or territories not determined, the College shall not enroll students from those locations until a determination of “Meets” has been made.
- Should a licensure/certification program be determined to no longer fully meet the educational requirements for a “Meets” state or territory, the program’s information shall be updated on the website, and current enrolled students whose student location matches that state or territory shall receive notification within fourteen (14) calendar days of the change in determination.

3.2. Certification of Students

- All new-to-the-College students who select a licensure/certification program as their major shall be asked to identify what their student location will be as an attending student. This process shall be completed prior to the student’s enrollment in courses.
- All new-to-the-College students who have selected a licensure/certification program as their major, are identified as a distance education student, AND have a student location outside of Nebraska must be further evaluated for enrollment eligibility.

- If the student location is a “Meets” state or territory as an attending student, the student can continue attending the College to complete their chosen program.
- If the student location is not a “Meets” state or territory as an attending student, the student will not be immediately eligible for the program.
- Should a new-to-the-College student not be immediately eligible for their chosen licensure/ certification program, they must be notified within fourteen (14) calendar days and disenrolled from all future licensure/certification program coursework. To remain enrolled in the licensure/certification program, the student will consult with the identified College representative to complete one of three options;
 - Request an evaluation of the educational requirements for licensure/certification for their current state or territory, to determine whether the program Meets the requirements for that location;
 - Change their major to a non-licensure/certification program or a licensure/certification program that is eligible, as based upon student location; or
 - Complete an attestation form that documents their plan to seek employment in a “Meets” state or territory, which then allows them to continue with their chosen licensure/certification program.
- Should a current student change their major to a licensure/certification program, they will be allowed to remain enrolled in their current semester of coursework. However, the process outlined for new-to-the-College students above shall be completed. This is true whether the student changes their major from a non-licensure/certification program to a licensure/certification program, or whether the student changes their major from one licensure/certification program to another licensure/certification program.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

Policy Adopted: June 1993

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