

# UNIVERSITY POLICY FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## Policy No. UPAA-6

### DISTANCE EDUCATION

#### 1 General Information.

- 1.1 Scope: This policy addresses a variety of issues related directly to the development and teaching of distance education courses for use in credit or non-credit courses or in support of university funded research.
- 1.2 Authority: W. Va. Code §18B-1-6
- 1.3 Passage Date: April 21, 2022
- 1.4 Effective Date: June 6, 2022
- 1.5 Controlling over: Marshall University
- 1.6 History: This policy replaces MUBOG Policy IT-5 Distance Education Courses (effective 12/13/2011). The policy was converted to MUBOG Policy AA-46, updated, and approved by the Marshall University Board of Governors on December 19, 2019.

#### 2 Definitions

- 2.1 The Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008, defines distance education in this way:
  - “(19) DISTANCE EDUCATION.—
    - (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided, the term ‘distance education’ means education that uses one or more of the technologies described in subparagraph (B)—
      - (i) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor; and
      - (ii) to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously.
    - (B) INCLUSIONS.—For the purposes of subparagraph (A), the technologies used may include—
      - (i) the Internet;
      - (ii) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
      - (iii) audio conferencing; or

- (iv) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in clauses (i) through (iii).”

2.2 *Online course* refers to any distance education course in which 100% of the course content is delivered asynchronously. There are no synchronous, face to face, or on-site attendance requirements. Online courses are designated as such in the schedule of courses.  
Designation: Online Course (OC).

2.3 *Hybrid course* refers to any distance education course in which a portion of the course is delivered synchronously with scheduled and required online, face to face, or on-site attendance requirements; the remainder of the course is delivered asynchronously. Types of *Hybrid courses* include the following delivery modes and are designated in the Marshall University schedule of courses:

2.3.1 T-course is a hybrid course in which 25% or more of the course is delivered synchronously requiring scheduled face-to-face or online attendance. Designation: Technology Enhanced (TE)

2.3.2 V-course is a synchronous course in which the faculty member holds live class meetings in person, by technological means, or by both delivery formats simultaneously. Designation: Virtual Class (VC)

2.3.3 IV-course is a synchronous course in which the faculty member holds live class meetings using the interactive video system. Designation: Interactive Video (IV)

2.4 *Hyflex course* refers to a course in which the students have both classroom-based and online options available for all or most learning activities.

2.4.1 Hyflex gives students the flexibility to choose when and where they study based on their own needs, desires, and preferences.

2.4.2 Students can also choose to change which option they use to attend courses weekly.

2.4.3 Instructors are expected to teach using methods that treat all students equitably regardless of the student’s modality.

2.5 *Course creator* refers to the individual(s) who generate(s) original content for the purpose of delivering an online or hybrid course.

2.6 *Content* refers to course content and materials (intellectual property) a course creator develops for instructional delivery as an online course.

### **3 Intellectual Property and Online Courses**

- 3.1 The Marshall University Intellectual Property Policy (MUBOG GA-4), addresses the ownership, licensing, and income distribution rights of online course materials.

### **4 Distance Education Course and Program Approval**

- 4.1 Distance education courses and programs must be approved by the appropriate academic dean and comply with department, college, and university policies and practices relating to distance education course quality and acceptable delivery practices.
- 4.2 Distance education courses must be approved by the faculty peer review committee in accordance with the university's established faculty-centered, peer review process.
- 4.3 Only courses and programs appearing in the current university catalog may be developed and submitted for distance education delivery.
- 4.4 Only approved distance education courses may be listed in the official schedule of courses.
- 4.5 Only approved distance education programs may be listed on the official university admissions application.

### **5 Teaching Distance Education Courses**

- 5.1 Faculty assigned to teach a distance education course must possess the online teaching endorsement required by the university.
- 5.2 A faculty member can develop and teach a different version of an existing distance education course with the approval of the department chair and dean.
- 5.3 If a distance education course instructor is unable to complete a semester course or will not be available to follow up with students who may receive an approved Incomplete, the relevant department will ensure that the course remains available.
- 5.4 The department chair/division head may enter a distance education course as part of the faculty evaluation process for retention, promotion, or tenure, or if required by a student academic appeal.
- 5.5 The Instructional Designers or the Information Technology staff will provide access to a distance education course when access is requested according to 5.3 and 5.4 above.

## **6 Course Delivery Format and Support**

- 6.1 Student access to distance education courses must be through the official online course management system. The appropriate dean and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) must approve any exceptions.
- 6.2 The University will make best practices information for distance education course development, training opportunities, and faculty resources available through Academic Affairs and Online Learning.
- 6.3 Information technology personnel will provide technical support for distance education courses.

## **7 Review and Update of Content**

- 7.1 The online faculty peer review committee will review active distance education courses every three years after the initial approval of the course or upon request of the CAO or appropriate dean. The purpose of the three-year review is to ensure that distance education courses remain current with changes in technology and best practices. The online faculty peer review committee will facilitate the review adhering to a timetable that allows for revisions to take place.
- 7.2 Academic units are encouraged to review distance education course content during the initial and three-year review cycle.