

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGES

ITEMS FOR CONSENT AGENDA

ACTION: **Final Round Approval of Revisions to Board Policy 4730;
Delivery of Distance Education Courses (AP)**

The revisions to Board Policy 4730 include the removal of reporting requirements, as information related to distance education is already embedded in Instructional Load and Enrollment reports. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) definition of distance education was added, as well as definitions for the various modalities that align with distance education. The standards and conditions were updated to include language related to the design and delivery of courses offered via distance education and expectations for faculty instructional effectiveness. Language was also modified related to student identity verification to reference the federal policy currently in effect.

The System Office recommends approval of the Revisions to Board Policy 4730; Delivery of Distance Education Courses (AP).

ATTACHMENTS:

- Revisions to Board Policy 4730 Delivery of Distance Education Courses (PDF)

NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM

Academics

TITLE: Design and Delivery of Distance Education Courses

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 ~~credit instruction~~ 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, 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.
- 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 asynchronously¹.
- 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 overall instruction for the course is delivered online via the Internet
- 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.
- 4.5. 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.

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

B.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.~~
- ~~1.2. An annual Online Programs Report pertaining to the preceding twelve months shall be filed by each institution with the Chancellor for review at the October or November Board meeting. The Chancellor shall provide guidelines for the format and content of this report.~~
- ~~1.3. Any institution that intends to obtain, purchase or lease telecommunications transmission equipment, or seeks to plan and enter into consorcial relationships with other organizations and agencies that would provide access to telecommunications transmission that would alter its capacity to deliver or extend the range of its delivery equipment, must receive approval of the Board.~~

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.~~
- ~~2.1.2.3. Instructors responsible for ~~credit~~ courses offered ~~through~~ via distance education must ~~be faculty members or must~~ meet the standards and procedures used by the ~~institution~~ College for the appointment of faculty responsible for on-campus ~~resident credit~~ courses. Provision must be made for the review and approval of faculty credentials by the appropriate administrator in the field(s) affected.~~
- ~~2.2.2.4. Procedures for evaluation of faculty responsible for ~~credit~~ courses offered ~~through~~ via distance education must be equivalent to those used by the ~~institution~~ College for the evaluation of faculty teaching ~~resident credit on-campus~~ courses.~~
- ~~2.3.2.5. Procedures for the evaluation of ~~the organization and content of~~ courses offered ~~through~~ via distance education must be equivalent to those used for ~~resident on-campus courses~~ instruction.~~
- ~~2.4.2.6. Each course offered ~~through~~ 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 ~~resident on-campus~~ courses. Standards for success or failure in~~

distance education courses must be as rigorous as those for resident-credit-on-campus courses.

~~2.5.2.7.~~ The ~~C~~olleges 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.10-050². ~~ensure that the student who registers in a distance education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course and receives the academic credit. The Chief Academic Officer at each college will establish a distance learning assessment policy that may include a substantial culminating experience that is proctored. (See Board Policy 4220).~~

~~2.6.2.8.~~ Each instructor of record in a course offered ~~through~~ via distance education must provide timely feedback to students regarding their progress and performance by methods equivalent to those used in resident-on-campus courses.

~~2.7.2.9.~~ Students enrolled in distance education courses must be provided with academic support services appropriate to the programdiscipline.

SOURCE:

BOT 6/5/1993; BOT 6/2/2006; BOT 3/26/2010; BOT 11/15/2013; BOT 7/30/2021

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