



Academic Continuity

Conversations with Program Reviewers (CPR)
October 20, 2020

Academic Programs Team
Campus Reviewer Contact Information:
<https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/app/find-your-campus-reviewer/>



Academic Continuity Q & A (Fall 2020)

Updated October 13th

- **Academic Program Planning: COVID-19 Resources:**

<https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/app/covid-19/>

- **Academic Continuity Q & A (Fall 2020):**

https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/academic-affairs/program-planning/covid-19/AcademicContinuityQAFall2020_Updated20201013.pdf

- **Resources for Remote and Online Learning:**

<https://online.suny.edu/covid19/>





Distance Education Definitions: Courses and Programs

What is the definition of a course offered via distance education?

- Use of one or more of the technologies listed below 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) The internet; (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (3) Audio conferencing; or (4) Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the first three technologies
- Instructional content is delivered exclusively (100%) via distance education; Hybrid courses are not considered to be distance education (e.g., spring 2020 courses that begin in-person and then transitioned to distance education)
- Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not count towards 100% requirement
- Requirements for an in-person practicum, residency, or internship do not count towards the 100% requirement
- A course taught 100% via distance education due to scheduling changes related to COVID-19 restrictions is considered to be a distance education course (e.g., summer 2020, fall 2020, winter 2021, and spring 2021 courses offered via distance education solely because of COVID-19)

What is the definition of a program offered via distance education?

- 50% or more of the program courses, including general education and core curriculum, are distance education courses



Regular and Substantive Interaction for Distance Education

- **Regular Interaction:** The institution provides the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and regular basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency, monitors the student's academic engagement and success, and ensures that the instructor(s) are responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.
- **Substantive Interaction:** Engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following:
 - Providing direct instruction;
 - Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
 - Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
 - Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
 - Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.



Distance Education ≠ Correspondence Education

Correspondence Course:

- The institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor
- Interaction between the instructor and student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student
- Correspondence courses are typically self-paced



NYSED Update: Distance Education

- [NYSED](#) has extended **distance education flexibility through spring 2021**
- Permits institutions to continue to offer distance education courses in programs **without triggering the need to register the programs in the distance education format, even if the 50% threshold will be reached**
- This flexibility is scheduled to end at the end of the Spring 2021 semester; therefore, institutions should begin to do a **thorough review of each program to determine the appropriate delivery mode(s)** for each program
- Institutions should then **request the addition of the distance education format to those programs that, beginning after the Spring 2021 semester, will be able to be completed 50% or more through distance education**
- NYSED is finalizing an expedited application to add the distance education format to registered programs

NYSED: Credit Hour Requirements

- [50.1\(o\)](#) of the Commissioner's Regulations defines a credit (a.k.a. semester hour) as follows: a credit, point, or other unit granted for the satisfactory completion of a course which requires at least 15 hours (of 50 minutes each) of instruction and at least 30 hours of supplementary assignments.
- For courses offered in a remote or online format, the total expected learning time remains the same (45 hours per credit hour), but the breakdown between instruction and supplementary assignments can vary. When calculating time, faculty should consider the time it would take for students to engage in the following: interacting with course presentations/lectures; reading other materials; participation in online discussions; doing research; writing papers or other assignments; and completing all other assignments (e.g., projects).



Middle States: Distance Education

COVID-Related Distance Education FAQ:

<https://www.msche.org/policies/faqs-for-covid-related-distance-education/>

USDE distance education flexibility expires December 31, 2020

To offer programs via distance education after December 31, 2020...

- Institutional Level: Scope of Accreditation must include Alternate Delivery Method – Distance Education (substantive change request must be submitted prior to November 1, 2020 to be considered for spring 2021)
- Program Level: Notification or Prior Approval (depending on non-compliance status)



Middle States: Distance Education

- Program Level: Notification, if have no non-compliance actions in past three years
 - For each program that adds the distance education format to its registration on or after July 1, 2020 *and* for each program that will temporarily exceed the 50% threshold of being offered via distance education due to scheduling adjustments related to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the institution must submit notification to MSCHE via the portal (<https://msche.force.com/ip>) within 30 days of this change
 - A notification must be submitted individually for each program and this consists of providing the program title, credential level, and a brief description
 - There is a cost of \$200 per program; though, this fee has been waived through June 30, 2021
- Program Level: Prior Approval, if had a non-compliance action in the past three years

Middle States: Distance Education

How to determine which programs fall into the distance education category:

- Access your institution's Inventory of Registered Programs
- Eliminate any programs that were registered in the distance education format prior to July 1, 2020
- Identify any existing programs that had the distance education format added to program registration on or after July 1, 2020 – **submit these for notification**
- For each remaining program, review course offerings in order to identify any programs for which 50% of the program will have been offered fully via distance education through spring 2021; this includes programs that temporarily exceed the 50% threshold of being offered via distance education due to scheduling adjustments related to the COVID-19 public health emergency – **submit these for notification**

Updates to the Q & A Document

- **What general guidance and resources are available to support the learning of students with disabilities?**
- **What are some solutions for lip and speech reading during the Covid-19 pandemic?**
- Nazely Kurkjian, System Coordinator of Disability, Diversity, and Nontraditional Student Services

Updates to the Q & A Document

- Academic Calendar (#12)
 - NYSED approved a regulation [amendment](#) to permit NYS colleges and universities to shorten the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters from a minimum of 15 weeks to no less than 12 weeks without impacting a student's eligibility for New York State financial aid. Please note, regardless of the number of weeks in the semester, colleges must still meet the semester hour requirement in Section 50.1(o) of the Regulations which requires at least 15 hours of instruction and at least 30 hours of supplementary assignments per semester hour/credit granted. There is no need to seek NYSED approval for calendar adjustments that meet the above-stated requirements.
 - For federal student aid purposes, through the end of the academic year that includes December 31, 2020 or the end date for the COVID-19 Federally declared emergency, whichever occurs later, the US Department of Education issued [guidance](#) permitting standard terms to overlap with an adjacent term without the program being considered non-term. Additionally, a standard semester may consist of as few as 13 weeks of instructional time without the program being considered a non-standard term program. It should be noted that any reduction in a program's defined academic year to less than 30 weeks of instructional time must be specifically approved by the School Participation Division (SPD). Submit your request by email to CaseTeams@ed.gov.
- Alternate Clinical Experience Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs (#13): AY 2020-21
- Alternate Clinical Experience Requirements for Licensure-Qualifying Programs (#14): Fall 2020
- Assessment (#17) – no change

Updates to the Q & A Document

Program Development and Review: Will SUNY continue to allow external evaluation of proposed new degree programs to be conducted remotely?

- SUNY will allow external evaluation of proposed new degree programs to be conducted remotely through June 30, 2021.
 - All questions in the external evaluation form must be addressed, which means materials must be made readily available to evaluators and remote connections with relevant stakeholders must be arranged
 - For programs that involve laboratory or other facilities that would have been visited during an on-site evaluation, the campus must be able to provide a way for evaluators to virtually interact with these facilities in a manner that would substantially approximate the in-person visit
 - External evaluators must be approved prior to the remote evaluation; given SUNY's commitments to diversity and inclusiveness, which includes the guiding principle that diversity and inclusiveness are integral components of the highest quality academic programs, campuses are expected to identify a diverse pool of potential evaluators and submit their CVs to SUNY (program.review@suny.edu) for consideration
- For questions about a particular program proposal, please contact your [campus program review liaison](#)

Remote and Online Learning Resources 1 of 2

- **Remote Instruction Website** – one place to aggregate resources and services for campus leaders, faculty/staff, students | Visit <http://online.suny.edu/covid19> or Contact erin.maney@suny.edu
- **Help Desk** – expansion Tier 1 and Tier 2 tech support to all campuses for students and faculty for online tools and technology | Visit <https://online.suny.edu/help/> or Contact mike.walker@suny.edu
- **Professional Development Webinars and Training** – upcoming webinars and training sessions along with the library of past recordings for faculty and staff on remote instruction topics, including instructional design, assessment strategies, accessibility, virtual/remote labs, supporting students online, technical training, and leadership | Visit <https://online.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/webinars-trainings/> or Contact jamie.heron@suny.edu
- **Faculty drop-in hours or Instructional Design as a Service (based on campus request)** – targeted instructional design support for faculty based on specific campus needs | Contact alexandra.pickett@suny.edu
- **Student drop-in hours (based on campus request)** – options for students to get answers to questions about learning remotely | Contact michele.forte@suny.edu
- **Open Digital Content and Adaptive Learning** – openly licensed digital content and support for adaptive learning strategies available through SUNY OER Services | Visit <http://oer.suny.edu> or Contact michael.daly@suny.edu
- **Communities of Practice** – 15 different discipline specific faculty communities of practice in Workplace to connect with faculty on other campuses and get access to remote instruction resources available in each discipline | Visit <https://online.suny.edu/covid19/faculty-staff/faculty-staff-resources/workplace-groups/> or Contact chris.price@suny.edu and alexandra.pickett@suny.edu
- **Accessibility Compliance for Online Course Content** – expansion of Blackboard’s Ally tool for assessing accessibility compliance and providing alternative file formats | Contact harry.cargile@suny.edu



The State University
of New York

Remote and Online Learning Resources 2 of 2

- **SUNY Pricing agreements and U-Wide Contracts** – options for remote proctoring, video captioning, virtual lab kits/materials, and online tutoring support | Visit <https://sunyedu.workplace.com/groups/339735673070689/files> (requires campus user/pass) or Contact dan.feinberg@suny.edu and sandy.cowin@suny.edu
 - **Vendor Offers** – free and low cost technology solutions provided by vendors for the higher ed community | Visit <https://online.suny.edu/covid19/campus-leaders/#options> or Contact erin.maney@suny.edu
 - **SUNY, State and Federal Guidance** – information, resources, and guidance on Academic Continuity, Remote Instruction, and Online Learning from the SUNY Provost's Office, NYS Education Department, U.S. Department of Education and Middle States | Visit <https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/app/covid-19/> or contact david.cantaffa@suny.edu
 - **Data/Tracking/Reporting** – dashboard to monitor individual campus usage of remote instruction services and guidance on campus level coding/tracking for remote, online, hybrid instruction | Visit <https://tinyurl.com/SUNY-COVID19-Response> or contact kristyn.muller@suny.edu and teresa.foster@suny.edu
 - **General comments/questions about support for online or remote instruction** – questions about services you may be looking for or wondering about or feedback on any of the services provided | Contact kim.Scalzo@suny.edu
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- **The Academic Programs Team:** David Cantaffa, Lenora German, Ann Hawkins, Fred Hildebrand, Dan Knox, Deb Moeckel, Lisa Montiel, Phil Ortiz, Angela Pagano, Susan Panetta, Laura Trottier: program.review@suny.edu and/or <https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/app/find-your-campus-reviewer/>

