11.99.99.D0.02   **Program and Course Delivery Modes**
Approved: October 04, 2016
Revised: February 9, 2021
Next Scheduled Review: February 9, 2026

Procedure Summary

This Standard Administrative Procedure provides guidelines on defining course and program delivery modes.

Definitions

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Distance Education Definition

Distance Education – The formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction.

Distance Education Course – A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent) of the instruction occurs when the student(s) and instructor(s) are not in the same place. Two categories of distance education courses are defined:

  a) Fully Distance Education Course – A course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test.
  b) Hybrid/Blended Course – A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent), of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place.

Distance Education Degree or Certificate Program--A program in which a student may complete a majority (more than 50 percent) of the credit hours required for the program through distance education courses.

Program-Level Definitions

Online Program – All courses required to complete the program are offered as fully online courses. Students can complete the program entirely at a distance with no required face-to-face or synchronous meetings.

Online+Colloquial Program – Program contains one or two specifically designed non-online courses, usually at the beginning or end of the program. All other courses are offered fully online.

Synchronous Distributed Program – All courses required to complete the program are offered either fully online or through synchronous distributed courses.

Traditional Program – A significant number of courses are offered only through traditional classroom courses. Some courses may be delivered via other course types.

Course-Level Definitions

Fully Online Course – Fully online courses have no on-campus, classroom, or synchronous activity. All course activity is done online. These courses may require virtual proctored exams. (100% online activity)

Online Blended Course – Online blended courses have most course activity online, but there are some required face-to-face or synchronous instructional activities, such as lectures, discussions, labs, or other in-person learning activities. (85-99% online activity)
- Three Semester Credit Hour course (45 classroom contact hours) – between 38.25 and 44.75 class contact hours of online course activity
- Four Semester Credit Hour course (60 classroom contact hours) – between 51.0 and 59.75 class contact hours of online course activity

Classroom Blended Course – Classroom blended courses have a blend of online and classroom meetings with the majority of course activity occurring online. (50-84% online activity)
- Three Semester Credit Hour course (45 classroom contact hours) - between 22.5 and 38.0 class contact hours of online course activity
- Four Semester Credit Hour course (60 classroom contact hours) - between 30.0 and 50.75 class contact hours of online course activity

Web-Enhanced Course – Web-enhanced courses have the majority of their course activities in the classroom, but supplemented by online activities. (11-49% online activity)
- Three Semester Credit Hour course (45 classroom contact hours) - between 5.0 and 22.25 class contact hours of online course activity
- Four Semester Credit Hour course (60 classroom contact hours) - between 6.5 and 28.75 class contact hours of online course activity

Synchronous Distributed Course – Synchronous distributed courses use internet and other technologies to extend the classroom lectures and other activities to students at remote sites in real time. (0-10% online activity)
- Three Semester Credit Hour course (45 classroom contact hours) - up to 4.5 class contact hours of online course activity
- Four Semester Credit Hour course (60 classroom contact hours) - up to 6.0 class contact hours of online course activity

Classroom – Classroom courses keep learning activities organized around scheduled class meetings with the instructor and all students in the same location. (0-10% online activity)

- Three Semester Credit Hour course (45 classroom contact hours) - up to 4.5 class contact hours of online course activity
- Four Semester Credit Hour course (60 classroom contact hours) - up to 6.0 class contact hours of online course activity

---

Procedure

---

1. GENERAL

In Title 19 Texas Administrative Code §4.257, The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board defines Distance Education as "formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction." And Distance Education Degree or Certificate Program as "[a] program in which a student may complete a majority (more than 50 percent) of the credit hours required for the program through distance education courses." They further define Fully Distance Course as "[a] course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time."

2. INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Across higher education in the United States, "fully online" courses have come to mean courses with no face-to-face or on-campus components. Students regularly seek out these courses and programs when their schedules or geographical locations prohibit their regular attendance face-to-face sessions. The Online Learning Consortium, the national leader of distance learning policy and research in the United States, identified the need for consistent and clear course and program definitions to assist institutions to meet students' expectations.

3. PROCESS – PROGRAM DELIVERY MODE

Assignment of program delivery modes is determined by the College Dean and Program Chair. Programs designated to offer the majority of courses at a distance must first obtain approval from the Coordinating Board.

The Dean and Program Chair will maintain and publish on the University web site a two-year course delivery plan for both face-to-face, if applicable, and distance courses. Deans and Program Chairs will ensure the course delivery plan contains sufficient Fully Online Courses (defined below) for distance students to complete at least one degree path at the same pace as Traditional Program students.

For a program desiring to be marketed as an Online Program (see definition below), the College Dean and Program Chair will submit the two-year course delivery plan

to the Assistant Vice President, Technology-Enhanced Learning for review and Associate Provost for approval before the program can be officially market as such.

4. PROCESS - COURSE DELIVERY MODE

Assignment of course section delivery mode is determined by the Program Chair in coordination with the teaching faculty member prior to opening the section for enrollment. The Registrar will list the course delivery mode of each section in the student registration system. Sections that require face-to-face or synchronous sessions will list the session date(s), time(s), and location(s).

5. PROCESS – DISTANCE LEARNING FEES

Distance Learning Fees are collected for all courses that meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board definition of distance education.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules (Title 19 Texas Administrative Code, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter P)](#)

[Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules (Title 19 Texas Administrative Code §4.257)](#)

Appendix

Appendix A – Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Financial Aid Impact

Contact Office

Assistant Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Learning
254-519-5435

Appendix A
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Financial Aid Impact

The follow chart indicates the residence category for VA purposes for each course delivery definition.

Course Type	Graduate	Undergraduate
Fully Online	Distance	Distance
Online Blended	Resident*	Distance
Classroom Blended	Resident	Distance
Web-Enhanced	Resident	Distance
Synchronous Distributed	Resident	Resident
Classroom	Resident	Resident

*Online Blended is a unique course type that may actually qualify for resident status for graduate students based on the resident training definition outlined in the School Certifying Officials Handbook and applicable CFR.

VA Regulatory Requirements (Source: VA School Certifying Official Handbook)
Undergraduate Resident Training (38 CFR 21.4267) – In-residence training for undergraduate students consists of regularly scheduled standard class sessions (at least once every two weeks). The total number of hours of classroom instruction (based on 50 minutes of instruction per hour) must equal, or be greater than, the number of credit hours awarded for the course multiplied by the number of weeks in the term.

Graduate Resident Training (38 CFR 21.4267) – In-residence training for graduate students consists of at least two regularly scheduled standard class sessions per term, research (either on or off campus), or a combination of both.