Distance Education Policy

Previously approved: $25 distance education fee
48 hour response time

Policy	Lamar
1. Definition	Distance Education is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. (SACS)
2. Use of LMS	Faculty teaching online credit courses or hybrid courses shall use the University approved LMS (currently Blackboard 9.1).
3. Response time	Faculty will respond to students via email, Twitter, phone, texts or other current technologies in a timely manner, no later than 48 hours.
THECB	*The program or course provides for appropriate interaction between faculty and students and among students*
SACS	*Programs and courses provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty and among students*
4. Course approval	**Each proposal to develop a new online course shall be submitted to the Distance Education Committee for approval at least 6 months prior to planned first offering.**
THECB	***It is the institution's responsibility to review educational programs and courses it provides electronically and certify continued compliance with these principles.***
5. Program approval	**A proposal to develop a new online program (degree or certification) shall be submitted to the Distance Education Committee at least 9 months prior to implementation. It will then be forwarded to the Provost with the committee's recommendation. This supersedes the requirement for individual course approval.**
THECB	***It is the institution's responsibility to review educational programs and courses it provides electronically and certify continued compliance with these principles.***
5. Faculty professional development	Faculty teaching online for the first time shall complete the core online teaching modules offered through the Center for Distance Education.
THECB	*The institution assures appropriate training for faculty who teach via the use of technology.*
SACS	*Faculty who teach in distance and correspondence education programs and courses receive appropriate training.*
6. Quality Assurance	All online shall be reviewed by faculty and/or staff of the Division of Distance Learning. Each course shall meet Quality Matters standards and comply with state and federal copyright law.
THECB	*It is the institution's responsibility to review educational programs and courses it provides electronically and certify continued compliance with these principles.*
THECB	*Review and approval processes ensure the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet the objectives of the program or course.*
SACS	*The technology used is appropriate to the nature and objectives of the programs and courses and expectations concerning the use of such technology are clearly communicated to students*
7. Calendar	All online courses shall follow the established university calendars for accelerated courses or the traditional

	university academic calendar.
8. Email	All faculty shall communicate with their students via Lamar University email addresses.
THECB	*The program or course provides for appropriate interaction between faculty and students and among students*
SACS	*Programs and courses provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty and among students*
SloanC	*Interaction is key: with instructors, classmates, the interface, and via vicarious interaction.*
9. Office hours	**Faculty will hold at least two office hours per week for each online course via appropriate technology.**
THECB	***The program or course provides for appropriate interaction between faculty and students and among students***
SACS	***Programs and courses provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty and among students***
SloanC	***Interaction is key: with instructors, classmates, the interface, and via vicarious interaction.***
10. Technical support	Technical support for faculty and students in both hybrid and online courses shall be provided through the Information Technology Service Desk and the Division of Distance Learning to include relevant private sector companies under contract to Lamar University.
THECB	*Enrolled students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services and student rights appropriate to support their learning.*
SACS	*Appropriate equipment and technical expertise required for distance and correspondence education are available.*
11. Faculty support	The Division of Distance Learning shall provide training and assistance for course development and online teaching to faculty (full time, part time, adjunct) through individual consultation, workshops and/or web-based resources.
THECB	*The institution assures appropriate training for faculty who teach via the use of technology*
THECB	*The program or course provides faculty support services specifically related to teaching via and electronic system.*
SACS	*Faculty support services are appropriate and specifically related to distance and correspondence education*
SACS	*Faculty who teach in distance and correspondence education programs and courses receive appropriate training.*
SloanC	*Significant technical support and training are provided by the institution.*
12. Existing Policies	All distance education courses and programs shall adhere to Lamar University and Texas State University System standards, policies and procedures. [1]
THECB	*Academic standards for all programs or courses offered electronically will be the same as those for programs or courses delivered by other means at the institution where the program or course originates.*

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[1] Approved University Distance Education Committee
3/21/13