Online Education Guidelines

Definitions
Distance education. Distance education (DE) is education that uses one or more types of technology to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. (US Department of Education)

Online course. A course that uses technology to deliver all elements of a course to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor or instructors, either synchronously or asynchronously. OSU defines online courses as those in which 100% of course activity occurs online.

Online program. A university- and regents-approved online program is one in which all course credit hours required to earn the associated credential are fully online courses. Students must be able to complete the program completely at a distance, with no required in-person meetings. Courses in the program may be synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination of the two.

> •Synchronous online format provides flexible access to content and instruction from any place, but at specific times. Students must be electronically present simultaneously with the instructor to receive instruction, typically delivered through live video.

> •Asynchronous online format provides flexible access to content and instruction at any time, from any place. Students do not have to be physically or electronically present simultaneously with the instructor. Instructional content is intentionally designed and delivered asynchronously to replace classroom instruction time (contact hours) between the student and instructor.

Blended/hybrid course. Blended/hybrid courses are those that utilized both online and traditional in-person modes of instructional delivery, and the scheduled in-person time for the course is reduced to account for the online instructional component.

Blended/hybrid program. A blended/hybrid program is one in which the course credit hours required to earn the associated credential include both fully online and blended/hybrid courses. Students may be required to complete some course/program requirements in person. Courses in the program may be synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination of the two.

Individual Study (formerly Correspondence Education). Online self-paced coursework where students have access to the entire course and exams by electronic transmission via the LMS. Interaction between the instructor and the student is not regular and substantive, and it is primarily initiated by the student.

Credit hour standard. Online courses should be designed to be an equivalent learning experience to in-person courses. Instructors should be mindful as they design and deliver online courses that they cover the appropriate volume of content, engage learners in similar learning processes, and result in the same outcomes as in-person course.

Distance Learner attribute (DIST).   The DIST attribute is applied to those students who are admitted to and enrolled in an approved online major, certificate or degree program. Students with the DIST attribute are limited to no more than 9 hours total of nonweb-based courses at the point of application of the DIST attribute. A student who has lost the DIST attribute due to excessive non-web courses or other reasons may appeal to their college for reinstatement of the DIST attribute.

Equivalent learning experience. Is the concept that an online course is designed to provide experiences with equal value for learners no matter what environment the learners are receiving the instruction.

Regular, substantive Interaction (RSI). A US Dept of Education regulation that refers to meaningful and consistent engagement between distance education students and their instructors or the educational content. It's about ensuring that students aren't solely asked to passively absorb information but are expected to actively participate in the learning process.

Online Course Delivery Requirements

The expectation is that there is no difference in the academic quality, academic standards including admission and retention standards, and student evaluation standards for courses and programs regardless of delivery method.

Online Course Syllabus. The online course syllabus must provide details regarding how and when instruction will occur, how learners engage with instruction, and how instructors engage with learners (RSI).

Online Program Design. Online programs must be delivered 100% online with no campus or in-person requirements. Courses in a program can be synchronous or asynchronous or a combination of the two. It is recommended that faculty who are developing an online course for the first time complete some professional development program such as the Preparing Online Instructors course offered by ITLE or work with an Instructional Designer to ensure high quality design.

Equipment and software/tools. Departments offering online or blended/hybrid courses or programs must provide students with accurate information about the technology requirements necessary to complete the course online learning and assessment requirements. Students must be informed in clear and understandable terms of the electronic or computer resources necessary for successful completion of the class including, but not limited to, word processing and other productivity tools, audio/visual components, e-mail, and internet services.

Technology Services to Support Online Courses and Programs

Learning Management System. OSU has a campus license with Canvas for their learning management system. Canvas can host course content, discussions, videos, assessments, etc. It is expected that instructors will deliver their online or blended/hybrid courses through Canvas.

Online Test Proctor Service. Faculty who teach online and choose to use an online test proctor must use the campus approved vendor. OSU has a campus license with Meazure Learning for online test proctoring. It is expected that any instructor choosing to require online test proctoring will use Meazure Learning. The cost of online test proctoring is charged to students' Bursar accounts.

Online Course Approval

New online course approval process. Online courses must be approved the first time they are offered in that format. The online course syllabi must be provided and the courses submitted in CourseDog for review and approval. The syllabus must reflect an online course delivery with detailed information about how the course will be taught, how the instructor engages with students, and how students will learn.

Online Learner Support

Learning resources. Students shall have access to facilities and learning materials (information resources, library, laboratories, equipment, etc.) on the same basis as students in the same program or courses taught at the originating campus. This includes library privileges for students through interlibrary loan and/or electronic resource access, including online access to catalogs, databases, and other materials.

Student services. Students shall have access to direct and indirect program guidance and academic support services, including admissions, enrollment, academic advisement, career counseling, enrollment/registration, tutoring, financial aid, and related services on the same basis as the students located on the originating campus. Online programs shall make these services available to students in electronic format using the working assumption that these students will not be physically present on-campus.

Technical support system. Students admitted to online programs and faculty teaching in online programs shall have access to appropriate technical support services. A comprehensive technical support system will be defined and available for all hardware, software and delivery systems specified by the institution as required for the courses and program. The support system must include a process for responding to technical problems in a timely manner. Online Learner Success Institutions shall make provisions for regular and substantive, synchronous or asynchronous interaction among learners, faculty, and learning content.