

TITLE: Distance Learning

ORIGINATOR: Academic Council

APPROVAL DATE: June 2, 2023

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 2, 2023

PURPOSE: To provide a guiding principle for providing distance education at MUW

SEE ALSO: IHL Policy 509, SACSCOC Standard 10.6, 34 CFR § 600.2

REVIEWER: Academic Council

REVIEW DATE: Spring 2028 and every five years thereafter

OPERATING DETAILS:

1. 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. All courses that are designated as distance education under the definition will be appropriately identified for students so that students are fully aware of the delivery method used for the course.
2. All course delivery methods must be approved by Academic Council. The Registrar shall maintain a list of approved delivery methods and descriptions on the Web site and in the Bulletin.
3. Distance education at MUW shall be executed in a manner that conforms with appropriate policies of MUW, Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), SACSCOC, other accrediting bodies, and the United States Department of Education (DOE). These include, but are not limited to, policies governing credit hours, course syllabi and student learning outcomes, academic calendar, grading, financial aid, and refunds.
4. All distance education courses must comply with the guidelines of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, and Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
5. Faculty teaching distance education courses will meet the regular qualifications stipulated by MUW policies, IHL, SACSCOC, DOE, and other accrediting bodies to which the programs are subject. Faculty also will be proficient in the virtual learning environment system through which courses will be delivered; departments may require that faculty complete training in specific systems.

6. Department Chairs and Deans will be responsible for scheduling courses and assigning and evaluating distance learning faculty in the respective disciplines under their supervision.
7. In accordance with federal law, attending a distance education class is the student completing the coursework by the use of two-factor authentication in order to access the course management system.
8. In accordance with federal regulations, all distance education courses shall include regular and substantive interaction between students and their instructors. This interaction must be initiated by the instructor, be scheduled and predictable, and be academic in nature and relevant to the course.
9. Students are responsible for any fee(s) related to student identification methods. Required course fees are published each term in the Schedule of Classes, which is available to students prior to registration.
10. Course examinations must be delivered in the current distance education platform unless exempted by the appropriate department chair.
11. FERPA guidelines are followed for all students regardless of the instructional environment.