

## 9-7

**DISTANCE LEARNING**

**Responsible Executive:** Provost and Executive Vice President-Academic Affairs  
**Approving Official:** Provost and Executive Vice President-Academic Affairs  
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**I. INTRODUCTION**

Online distance education was initiated at Florida State University (FSU) in 1999. Since that time, FSU has provided centralized support for its online and distance education services to registered students located wherever they have access to the internet. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Substantive Change Committee that visited the campus on January 28–30, 2001, approved the university’s centralized approach. The university provides distance learning in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The Office of Distance Learning (ODL),<sup>1</sup> situated within the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and advised by the university’s Faculty Senate Distance Learning Committee (~~FSDLC~~),<sup>2</sup> ~~bears responsibility~~ is responsible for administrative oversight of distance education at FSU.

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## Background

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Online distance education was initiated at Florida State University (FSU) in 1999. Since that time, FSU has provided centralized support for its online and distance education services to registered students located wherever they have access to the internet. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Substantive Change Committee that visited the campus on January 28–30, 2001, approved the university's centralized approach. The university provides distance learning in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The Office of Distance Learning (ODL),<sup>1</sup> situated within the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and advised by the university's Faculty Senate Distance Learning Committee (FSDLC),<sup>2</sup> bears responsibility is responsible for administrative oversight of distance education at FSU.

### Definition of Distance Learning

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According to SACSCOC, "distance education" is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction in a course (interaction between students and instructors and among students) occurs when students and instructors do not share the same location. Instruction may be distributed using many forms of technology.

The State of Florida defines distance learning a bit differently for the purposes of assessing a distance learning course fee. For that purpose, "a distance learning course is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both" (1009.24 ([17]) F.S.). For the purpose of further distinction, hybrid/blended courses are defined as those where 50 to 79 percent of the course is delivered using some form of technology in a combined class offering where the student and faculty are not engaged in traditional face-to-face instruction.

~~FSU Florida State University~~ delivers its instruction in several different ways. These delivery methods differ, in part, in whether some form of technology serves as the equivalent of contact hours for purposes of defining a student credit hour. The difference turns in large measure on how the delivery methods ~~they~~ differ regarding student-faculty contact hours, which ~~that~~ are key in defining a student credit hour. Contact hour equivalence is fundamental to establishing equivalent student credit hours and is determined by peer review curriculum committees at the department/school/college level.

Classes ~~consist are~~ of three general types: ~~standard~~ traditional, technology enhanced, and distance learning.

### ~~Standard~~ Traditional Class

~~—A standard~~ traditional class typically occurs in a classroom or lab. When the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both, none of the "direct instruction of the course is delivered using [any] form of technology."<sup>3</sup>

~~“The delivery of the instruction may or may not make use of the follow[ing] technologies or devices: chalk or white board, overhead, TV, VCR/laser disc/DVD, radio/audio, computer LCD projector, internet. Technology is not used in lieu of class meeting time or as a supplement to the course beyond the use of such materials within a classroom. Seat time (contact hours) is not replaced or supplemented by any alternative delivery method or medium.” (Office of the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement (FDA), Distance Learning Evaluation Guidelines for Use with the Curriculum Request Form)<sup>3</sup>~~

### **Technology Enhanced Class**

~~+~~In a technology enhanced class, when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both, “1–49% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology.”<sup>3</sup>

~~the delivery of the instruction makes use of technology or instructional materials beyond those available or distributed in the “standard” (traditional) classroom. Enhancements to learning therefore must include activities or instructional resources developed for student use that extend beyond the classroom instructional use of these items. In short, the use of the technology supplements but does not replace contact hours.” (FDA, Distance Learning Evaluation Guidelines for Use with the Curriculum Request Form)<sup>3</sup>~~

### **Distance Learning Class: Mostly Online and Fully Online**

~~+~~Class types include a combined mostly online class offering and a distance learning fully online class offering. There are two types of distance learning classes: A combined mostly online class offering is typically delivered in the traditional face-to-face format on the main or branch campus. -Mostly online classes, when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both, offer “80–99% of the direct instruction ... using some form of technology.” A fully online class is one in which “100% of the direct instruction ... is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both.”<sup>3</sup>

~~“Combined courses offer less than 80% of the total course content through the use of some alternative means, i.e., website, video, iChat, etc. The delivery of the instruction makes use of technology or instructional materials beyond those available or distributed in the ‘standard’ (traditional) classroom. In short, the use of the technology does supplement and replace some contact hours for courses taught on the main or a branch campus.”~~

~~In a distance learning class, “the delivery of some or all of instructional content is reliant upon an alternative delivery method in addition to or in place of traditional face-to-face instruction where students and the instructor meet in the same place and at the same time. If any one student receives instruction (contact hours) through an alternate delivery method, then the course by default may be termed as a distance learning course.” (FDA, Distance Learning Evaluation Guidelines for Use with the Curriculum Request Form)<sup>3</sup>~~

When a class does not meet face-to-face with the instructor, alternative modes of instruction may substitute for standard classroom contact hours, provided the substitution has been approved by the university Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC) and the authorization is on file with the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement. For example, the Faculty Senate has determined that an asynchronous discussion board on the web might substitute for some standard classroom contact hours, just as some standard class time might be used by the instructor for class discussion “It is the responsibility of the peer review curriculum committees at Department/School/College level to determine the appropriate and academically justified number of contact hour equivalents assigned to each element of the proposed alternate delivery variant of a class.” Notably, it is the policy of the Faculty Senate that “unplanned contact between instructor and student(s) that does not directly relate to planned delivery of course content or achievement of course objectives should be regarded as the equivalent of office hours, and should NOT be assigned equivalents to standard classroom contact hours.” ~~(Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement, Distance Learning Evaluation Guidelines for use with the Curriculum Request Form)~~<sup>33</sup>

### **Governance and Curriculum**

The appropriate Faculty Senate Committee is responsible for approval of courses and programs offered by the University. Both undergraduate and graduate courses are subject to criteria established by the FSCC after receiving approval from within the sponsoring department and/or college. All new courses are subject to review, approval, and recommendation by either the undergraduate or graduate policy committees. The FSCC must approve all new courses. Both courses and programs, especially those offered by distance learning, must comply with the criteria established by SACSCOC.

The ~~Florida State University~~ Faculty Senate Graduate and Undergraduate Policy Committees, in conjunction with the Office of the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement, the Graduate School, and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, have determined that the following criteria must be met before a degree program can be offered in an online format:

- The proposed degree or program meets demonstrable need and does not negatively impact existing undergraduate or graduate offerings of the university.
- A complete degree program is offered that enables enrolled students to graduate in a timely fashion.
- There are sufficient program facilities and faculty and support staff willing and able to deliver the degree program at the requisite level of quality.
- The faculty involved will be able to meet their other commitments (undergraduate teaching, doctoral student training, etc.), or appropriate arrangements have been made to release the faculty from these other duties.
- The online degree program meets all relevant university degree program requirements.
- The online degree program will be comparable in quality to the on-campus

version.

- Adequate plans have been formulated for developing the online degree program, ~~for~~ respecting the requirements of good online instructional design and delivery, and ~~for~~ evaluating the effectiveness of the program on a regular basis.
- The integrity of the student work and the credibility of degrees and credits are ensured.
- The program adheres to the SACSCOC guidelines on distance and correspondence education.

New single distance learning courses approved by the FSCC are subject to a related set of standards. Specifically, before a single course can be offered in an online format the following criteria should be met:

- The online course meets demonstrable need and does not negatively impact existing undergraduate or graduate offerings of the university.
- The online course allows enrolled students to graduate in a timely fashion or enables departments to schedule classes that might otherwise not be offered to students.
- There are sufficient facilities and faculty and support staff willing and able to deliver the course at the requisite level of quality.
- The faculty involved will be able to meet their other commitments, or appropriate arrangements have been made to release faculty from these other duties.
- The online course meets all relevant university course requirements.
- The online ~~class~~ course will be comparable in quality to ~~the~~ an on-campus version.
- Adequate plans have been formulated for developing the online course, ~~for~~ respecting the requirements of good online instructional design and delivery, and ~~for~~ evaluating the effectiveness of the courses on a regular basis.
- The integrity of the student work and the credibility of courses and credits are ensured.
- The course adheres to the SACSCOC guidelines on distance and correspondence education.

### **Institutional Responsibility for Distance Learning Activities**

The faculty assume primary responsibility for and, through their committees, exercise oversight of distance learning at ~~FSU, Florida State University~~. The faculty ensures the rigor of distance learning courses and programs and acts to maintain the quality of instruction. The Faculty Senate, through its committees, ensures that sound and acceptable practices are used for determining the amount and level of credit awarded. Faculty committees, with the approval of the Faculty Senate, ensure that courses and programs constitute coherent entities that are compatible with the university's mission and appropriate to offer at an institution of higher education. The ~~F~~faculty ensures that

they are appropriately trained to offer the material in approved courses and that there are sufficient members qualified to develop, design, teach, and oversee approved programs. The Faculty works with university ~~the administration of the university~~ to establish and monitor instruction in distance learning courses and programs.

The faculty, through ongoing assessment and evaluation, regularly updates courses and programs. Online courses and programs are subject to the same institutional effectiveness practices as traditional offerings. Online courses will be assessed by faculty on a continual basis to ensure they meet the requisite level of quality and provide comparable quality and effectiveness to on-campus versions.

Administratively, ODL supports the faculty and helps realize the university's mission to extend education statewide by offering courses and degree programs online and at many off-campus sites around the state. As its primary mission, ODL serves academic departments by providing guidance and technological assistance to develop, deliver, assess, maintain, and improve distance learning degree and certificate programs for graduate and undergraduate students.<sup>44</sup> Specifically, ODL provides resources to promote, implement, facilitate, and assess university initiatives related to teaching enhancement and technology-mediated learning environments that support student academic achievement. ODL works with a range of campus offices to ensure the continued financial viability of distance learning courses and programs. ODL ensures ~~that the university deploys technology appropriate to the nature and objectives of courses and programs and communicates communications~~ directly with students about university expectations regarding the use of such technology.

ODL faculty and staff members collaborate with distance learning faculty and teaching assistants to promote instructional excellence at FSU Florida State University through the use of effective educational and communications technologies, evidence-based instructional principles and strategies, and research studies on teaching innovations. ODL works ~~Working~~ with other university offices to ensure ~~,~~ students in distance learning courses and programs have effective use of appropriate library resources. Students taking distance courses are also provided with adequate and accurate information about course and program requirements along with available services. ODL deploys technology and employs procedures that ensure the integrity of distance learning course and program offerings. This includes procedures keyed to integrity and security that demonstrate that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student as the one who participates in and completes the course or program and ultimately receives credit for those activities. These security measures include secure logins and unique pass codes. ODL is online at <http://distance.fsu.edu>.

### **The ODL Organizational Structure**

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ODL accomplishes its mission and assists faculty through a ~~clear,~~ well-defined organizational structure. ODL consists of five main units:

#### **ODL Technical Support**

The technical support team manages the Instructure Canvas Learning

~~A~~management ~~S~~ystem (LMS), which provides a secure environment for teaching and learning. Additionally, the unit supports other related academic technologies (lecture capture, clickers, web conferencing, etc.) Support includes the LMS help desk, reporting assistance, training and workshops, and third-party integration support.

### **Online Programs and Student Support**

~~A~~Academic ~~program specialists~~ ~~coordinators~~ within ODL provide personal ongoing educational support to distance learners across the nation throughout their ~~entire~~ tenure at FSU. From the prospective student's first inquiry about a program to their final semester, ~~FSU ODL~~ academic program specialists ~~coordinators~~ and support staff are available to guide, advise, and assist.

### **Online Course Development and Faculty Support**

~~FSU ODL~~ ~~I~~nstructional ~~D~~evelopment ~~F~~aculty work with departments to help them determine quality standards and best practices in online teaching and learning to produce and promote innovative distance learning (~~DL~~) strategies and technologies.

### **Finance and Administration**

The finance, accounting, and human resource specialists provide budget management and ~~DL~~ distance learning staff appointment support for colleges and departments offering distance learning courses. This unit manages over 100 distance learning auxiliary accounts and tracks ~~DL~~ distance learning fee receipts, expenditures, and appointments associated with those accounts.

### **Assessment and Testing**

~~This unit~~ ~~P~~rovides course evaluation services, tests and test-taking services, and coordination of proctoring for ~~DL~~ distance learning exams. The unit also provides a range of scanning services that involve using mark-sense forms to collect responses for paper-based multiple-choice exams and surveys.

## **Process for Distance Course Development**

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ODL serves departments, programs, faculty, and students by using current technologies to deliver university courses and degree programs beyond the main campus. In addition to its activities involving individual courses, ODL supports the development and delivery of numerous undergraduate and graduate degree programs ~~and that include majors in business administration, communications disorders, computer science, criminology, educational leadership, higher education, instructional systems, library and information studies, engineering, nursing, interdisciplinary social science, social work, special education, and emergency management and geographic information systems.~~ ODL also ~~provides support to undergraduate and graduate~~ distance learning certificate programs.

The process to translate an existing or new course or program of instruction to distance

learning distribution varies according to the type and disposition of the course or program. An interested individual or unit seeking ODL support to deliver a course or program via distance must also work through the university approval process. It is recommended that the initial appropriate university application(s) be initiated at least two semesters before the first course is to be offered to allow time for all stages of the process.

Individuals and departments proposing to develop new degrees, majors, or certificate programs (rather than converting existing) should begin by contacting the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement ~~(FDA)~~ in the Office of the Provost. Academic Affairs. ~~Academic Affairs~~. New degree programs require a formal exploration stage as well as an implementation stage. The application templates for each situation are available online. Once and once completed and submitted, the templates are subject to a thorough review and approval process requiring approval at eight levels (undergraduate) or nine levels (graduate), including notification to ODL that a new distance course or program is pending.<sup>5</sup>

With departmental approval and support, individuals or units can apply to ODL for ~~E&G~~ [KH1] development funding to convert existing or and new courses or and programs to an online format. To obtain this funding, departments and individual faculty propose course development projects by detailing the educational need for the online offering and indicating the support of the dean, chair, and/or faculty offering the course, program, or certificate.<sup>5</sup>

Once the ODL proposal is reviewed and accepted (with or without development funding), the next step is to prepare and sign a Letter of Agreement with ODL establishing responsibility of the respective development and support roles.<sup>6,7</sup> To translate a currently offered, on-campus class, or course of study to a distance learning delivery format, a program director must develop and submit an outline of the program, the prerequisites for taking the course, the syllabus, an enrollment estimate, an application to offer the course in a technology enhanced mode of instruction, and a per annum budget template.<sup>7,8,9</sup> Proposals for ODL development funding for graduate certificate programs are processed similarly. These actions will typically require involvement of a faculty member, department and ~~FS curriculum committees~~ FSCC, the department chair, and dean.

After the Letter of Agreement, three-year auxiliary budget projections, estimated enrollments, and university approvals are in place, ODL's instructional development faculty will advise and consult on:

- instructional design and project management for online learning (including appropriate student activities and assessments),
- processes for developing multimedia and other online course materials,
- FSU administrative procedures for approving and offering online courses, and



- development of a detailed budget projection and enrollment estimates.

## Faculty and Student Support

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ODL is responsible for ~~The Office of Distance Learning also has the responsibility of~~ providing FSU's distance learning instructors and teaching assistants with:

- assistance with the conversion of instructional materials to a format suitable for online delivery,
- training in the use of current technology tools to enhance the online learning experience,
- research, development, and collaboration with distance learning faculty at FSU, as well as other schools, for the dissemination of best practices methodology in the distance learning environment,
- information and training on intellectual property issues, copyright, and fair use of media and publications in online courses,
- management of grants and award opportunities for distance learning faculty who wish to engage in developing innovative instruction and applying new technologies to their online instruction, and
- quality enhancement initiatives for curriculum and teaching improvement to support student success, academic integrity, and successful program completion in the distance-learning environment.

Likewise, ODL is responsible for providing FSU's distance learning students with access to distance courses and programs. Distance students are able to do everything at a distance that is necessary to matriculate at FSU, from application and registration to checking grades and getting transcripts. In addition, ODL works with ~~Information~~ ~~the Office of~~ Technology Services, ~~the Office of~~ Admissions, ~~the Office of the University Registrar's~~ Office, and ~~the~~ Controller's Office to develop and maintain a mandatory online orientation process for distance students. These services are equivalent to on-campus, face-to-face assistance but can be accessed online or via email and telephone.

Prospective students can contact ODL ~~academic program specialists~~ ~~distance learning coordinators~~ for:

- assistance with finding online courses, certificates, and degree programs that are specific to student's academic status and educational goals,
- information about online course and program costs and locations with direct links to the college and department advisors who are offering those courses and programs,
- navigation through the university's admissions, advising, and registration processes that are specific to off-campus students,
- connection to online mentors and teaching assistants,
- virtual access to library materials and services for distance learning students,

- access to affordable textbooks for all courses,
- help\_desk support for the Canvas LMS, learning management system (Canvas), and
- virtual access to frequently asked questions and answers for prospective and current distance learning students, as well as a link to file complaints ~~for prospective and current distance learning students~~ (available at <http://online.fsu.edu> <https://distance.fsu.edu>).

Both faculty and student support are complemented by a variety number of workshops and online tutorials. Faculty ~~members~~ are provided tutorials that cover topics ranging from exam writing to the development of course websites.

### **Financial Aid Policy for Distance Learning Students**

The Office of Financial Aid and ODL share information on respective policies related to distance learning programs and communicate on any updates required.

- Financial aid is available to all students admitted/enrolled in degree programs.
- Students should apply for aid by completing the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> each year, as soon as possible after January 1.
- To be eligible for financial aid disbursement, students must be enrolled each term for at least half-time enrollment (minimum of six credit hours).
- Students who withdraw or fail to complete coursework may be required to repay aid. Additional information can be found in the FSU Bulletin at [https://registrar.fsu.edu/archive/bulletin/undergraduate/2018\\_gen\\_bulletin.pdf](https://registrar.fsu.edu/archive/bulletin/undergraduate/2018_gen_bulletin.pdf)
- ~~[http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergrad/info/financial\\_info.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergrad/info/financial_info.htm)~~

### **Fee Characteristics and Development**

Under Florida Statutes and in accordance with FSU policy, the university will assess a student who enrolls in a course listed in the Florida Higher Education Distance Learning Catalog a per--credit hour distance learning course fee ~~{s.1009.24 [17] Florida Statutes}~~. The FSU Board of Trustees has the authority to set all mandatory tuition and fees assessed by the university, including fees associated with distance learning. The amount of the fee may not typically exceed the additional costs of the services provided that which are attributable to the development and delivery of the distance learning course. Distance learning courses that are partially funded by contracts or grants, for expenses associated with those courses, can proportionally reduce the amount of the ~~DL distance learning~~ fee, but cannot eliminate the need to charge the fee to recover those expenses not paid by the contract or grant.

Universities are also allowed to propose and have approved by the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) market rates for graduate-level courses offered online when such courses constitute an approved degree program or college credit certificate program.

Such market tuition rate courses are subject to criteria established by BOG rule (BOG Regulation 7.008 (15)). In either case, the ODL, working in cooperation with the university Budget Office of Budget, develops and maintains a template that enables the requirement that a distance learning fee be established or the BOG-approved market tuition rate be justified. The template provides a means for estimating enrollments and program costs that allows for a simple cost-benefit analysis. The ODL academic program specialists, coordinators, and fiscal staff assist faculty and staff within FSU colleges and departments with:

- budget development for setting annual distance learning fees for individual courses/programs,
- preparing the budget office templates and applications for auxiliary accounts,
- managing expenditures, appointments, and reporting for distance learning auxiliary accounts, and
- entering distance learning courses into the course schedule master (CSM) to ensure that those courses are properly coded and posted for registration in accordance with university registration course coding procedures.

### **Distance Learning Technology**

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As part of its mission, ODL provides the university community a secure environment for teaching and learning. All distance courses are hosted in the FSU Learning Management System (LMS) through Blackboard (Bb). Canvas is an LMS designed to provide secure access to course information, academic materials, and communications with faculty and other students. The Bb Grading Center provides a platform for secure online testing within Bb.

All FSU distance learning instructors have the option to prescribe proctored exams at the main campus Testing Center and external sites monitored by the ODL Assessment and Testing unit. Mentors (online teaching assistants) are assigned to the faculty conducting online courses to ensure that students are properly assisted with the academic course content and associated digital materials. Through my.FSU.edu, distance students access their individual, graduate, or undergraduate admissions and registration information, and can virtually contact academic advisors from each department. The Canvas LMS system is designed to facilitate faculty and student-to-student interaction.

Because FSU courses reside in Canvas, the ODL Technical Support unit is also responsible for providing help-desk support for all face-to-face as well as distance learning students and instructors. Faculty and teaching assistants who teach online courses are provided with specialized training in various technologies that are required for synchronous and asynchronous teaching at a distance. Instruction in the development and use of specialized digital materials, textbooks, and other media is provided to all distance learning DL as well as face-to-face faculty and students. ODL is responsible for tracking student completion rates through Bb. In 2010/11, FSU online graduate students had a completion rate of 98%; online undergraduates had a completion rate of 92%. 10

### **Quality through Assessment and Evaluation**

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The ODL Strategic Plan~~11~~ is a dynamic process that drives development and measurement of distance learning goals, objectives, and outcomes as reflected in the FSU Institutional Effectiveness Portal (IEP). In support of those outcomes, and in partnership with the FSU Faculty Senate Academic Integrity Committee, ODL faculty representatives subscribe to the University of Maryland Online (~~MOL~~) Quality Matters program. Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses. As a peer-based approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement in online education and student learning, QM has received national recognition. The QM Quality Matters Rubric consists of eight general standards and ~~42~~ 41 specific review standards used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses.~~13~~ The Rubric includes annotations explaining the application of the standards and their interrelated meanings. A scoring system and online tools facilitate the evaluation by a team of reviewers. ODL makes these resources available to all FSU distance learning faculty during the development of online courses. QM review of distance learning courses is required for all courses developed with ODL funding. QM review of all online courses may be conducted by the FSCC Curriculum Committee or as required by the Faculty Senate.

Departments offering distance courses, programs, and certificates, work with ODL to ensure ~~assure~~ the comparability of instruction offered by online distance learning. They conduct assessment of student learning and program outcomes involving measures ranging from embedded course performance to student retention and student satisfaction. Appropriate units of the university work with the FSU Libraries and the Office ~~Division~~ of Student Affairs to assess the effectiveness of their services to students engaged in distance instruction. Online courses and programs are subject to the same institutional effectiveness practices as traditional offerings. ~~In addition, online courses and programs are assessed at least every three years by the appropriate committee of the Faculty Senate to ensure they meet the requisite level of quality and provide comparable quality and effectiveness to on-campus versions.~~ Online courses will be assessed by faculty on a continual basis to ensure they meet the requisite level of quality and provide comparable quality and effectiveness to on-campus versions.

A critical component in the ongoing evaluation of the quality of distance learning programs is the assessment and testing of our distance learning students and instructors. The ODL Assessment and Testing unit (~~ODL/AT~~) provides proctored and secure testing environments for DL ~~distance~~ learning students. This unit ~~ODL/AT~~ is also responsible for mentor, instructor, and course evaluations for face- to-face as well as distance courses. In addition to testing and assessment services, distance learning instructors receive support for developing secure assessment strategies as part of their online course plans. Online and face-to-face workshops and consultations are provided for distance learning instructors and teaching assistants.

## Academic Integrity

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To ~~ensure~~ ~~assure~~ academic integrity, distance learning students taking online classes at FSU gain access to course materials and educational resources by means of secure login authentication. Upon admission to the university, each student creates a unique electronic identity that is protected by a password. ~~All~~ ~~Communications~~ are managed through the secured ~~LMS~~ ~~learning management system~~, including contact with the instructor, collaboration with peers, submission of assignments, and accessing grades. This ~~procedure~~ ~~solution~~ is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (~~FERPA~~) since all student-related data are password protected and access is appropriately restricted.

Course and teaching evaluation of online courses is accomplished using a web-based form that comprises student-related information ~~and~~ a standard set of questions, as well as optional additional questions that can be customized by the department and the instructor.<sup>9</sup> A sample of the form and summaries of numeric questions are available to the public online. Results are used for both formative and summative evaluation of courses and instructors. Instructors use the feedback in order to identify areas for improvement, and administrators use it to make decisions about promotion, tenure, and recognition (e.g., teaching awards).

Instructors who teach distance courses and who use high-stakes exams to test students' knowledge and skills partner with the ODL ~~Assessment and Testing~~ ~~/AT~~ unit to coordinate proctoring. The unit uses a network of professional testing centers to proctor exams for remote students within 100 miles of their domicile. ODL staff work with individual students to accommodate special needs and to identify and validate proctors that are outside of the current network. The process is guided through an online resource on ODL's website.

Though FSU does not charge its students for testing in the main campus Testing Center, students taking exams outside of Tallahassee, or through an online proctoring service, will likely pay fees to an approved, external testing facility/administrator for the services they provide. The university is obligated to inform students of this additional cost that may be associated with their coursework. ODL provides a notification of proctored testing fees for all online courses in the registration system to ensure the notice is available at the time of course enrollment.

ODL works with several university committees and task forces that ~~impact and~~ govern all aspects of teaching online. The Faculty Senate Distance Learning Committee (~~FSDLC~~) considers curricular policies and procedures at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. ~~This committee~~ ~~The FSDLC~~ is in charge of monitoring the effectiveness of procedures and standards governing online courses and programs and proposing changes to the full Faculty Senate when needed. The Faculty Senate Teaching Evaluation Committee ensures that all courses are evaluated and proposes procedures and policies to ensure the effectiveness of the evaluations. In addition, ODL faculty participate in special task forces and ad-hoc committees, such as the Ad-~~H~~oc Committee on Academic Integrity, which was charged with the review of current practices to support and enforce academic integrity.

## Reporting and Auditing

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ODL is responsible for maintaining aggregate data and responding to information requests from numerous internal and external entities. In cooperation with the FSU Office of Institutional Research (FSU/IR), ODL creates reports regarding distance learning retention rates, course sections, student enrollments, and trends. ODL, working with FSU/IR, ensures accurate headcount information on students participating in online instruction. ODL works with FSU Student ~~Financial Business Services~~ to project, track, and report ~~DL distance learning~~ tuition and fee receipts. ~~ODL~~ ~~The Office~~ also prepares various reports for the Florida Legislature and responds to ~~DL distance learning~~ data requests from the ~~Florida BOG Board of Governors~~ and the Florida Virtual Campus.

ODL, working with the Office of the General Counsel, ensures that online distance learning activities and procedures are in compliance with applicable state and federal laws:

- ODL provides guidance to colleges and departments to ensure they meet regulatory obligations regarding out-of-state marketing and recruiting activities defined by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).<sup>10</sup>
- ODL assists colleges and departments in tracking and reporting out-of-state clinical placements, field experiences, licensure requirements, and other information as required by NC-SARA. This support extends to both distance and face-to-face programs generating out-of-state activities.
- ODL notifies distance learning students enrolled in programs whether or not their coursework meets their home state's requirements for licensure or certification. (This information is determined and regularly verified by the college or department offering the program.)
- ODL notifies students when a distance learning fee is associated with a course. Distance learning fees are determined by the college or department offering the online course. Notification is provided in the registration system to ensure students are aware of the fee at the time of course enrollment.
- ODL notifies students that an online course may be associated with fees for proctored testing. These fees apply to students whose instructor requires them to take their tests via a proctored testing facility or service and who live too far from the FSU main campus to utilize its free testing services. Notification is provided in the registration system at the time of course enrollment to ensure students know they may incur additional costs for testing.

In addition to data gathering and reporting, ODL participates in numerous "best practices" consultations with higher education and distance learning consortia, research institutes, and colloquia. ODL is often called upon to respond to media requests through the FSU Office of University Communications. FSU departments that engage in distance learning often have additional accreditation reports requiring ODL assistance.

ODL ensures ~~there is~~ adequate funding is available for faculty, staff, service, and technological infrastructure to support online distance instruction. ODL works closely with academic departments and the FSU Budget Office on the establishment and management of distance learning financial auxiliary accounts. For administrative and financial purposes, all ~~DL distance learning~~ activities coordinated by ODL are treated as auxiliary operations. The Budget Office assists the Auxiliary Service Board (~~ASB~~) in the oversight of all FSU auxiliary operations and coordinates with ODL on the establishment and management of distance learning auxiliaries. ODL is therefore responsible for the management of fundable, non-fundable, and market rate distance learning auxiliary (~~supported with a distance learning course fee, non fundable supported distance learning and market tuition rate graduate program (non fundable distance learning) auxiliary designated~~) accounts.

Financial oversight of ~~DL distance learning~~ auxiliary operations includes adherence to FSU's Cash Mmanagement Policy for auxiliary operations.<sup>11-14</sup> ~~DL distance learning~~ auxiliary operations are subject to internal audit by the FSU Office of Inspector General Audit Services as well as external audit by state and federal entities. The ODL budget business manager and accountants are responsible for detailed and auditable accounting records that differentiate between the revenues generated by multiple distance learning courses and programs. ODL ensures that academic ~~DL distance learning~~ account owners and auditors have secure access to auxiliary ~~DL distance learning~~ account summaries in the ~~Bb Canvas~~. Budget Snapshot Organization. These online reports document appointment details for ~~DL distance learning~~ development and teaching, year-end cash on hand, account receivables, expenditures, current ~~DL distance learning~~ fee billing rates, and FSU overhead assessments. The online reports also include the methodology for annual adjustment of ~~DL distance learning~~ fees by program. In addition, the ODL ~~DL distance learning~~ auxiliary budget manager and accountants provide financial information pertaining to ~~DL distance learning~~ auxiliary accounts to the FSU Controller's Office annually.

~~<http://www.adec.edu>~~

### **III. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

Article IX, section 7, Florida Constitution, Sections 1001.28, 1001.706, 1009.24 Florida Statutes, BOG Regulations 1.001, 7.003, 8.00

The Florida State University Board of Trustees has delegated authority to the President who has delegated to the Provost the authority to make academic policy.

/s/ Name of Approving Official

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[Proof of approval retained in file]



## Appendix A-A

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### Attachments and Hyperlinks

1. The Office of Distance Learning at <https://distance.fsu.edu/>
2. Faculty Senate Distance Learning Committee at <http://facsenate.fsu.edu/Standing-Faculty-Senate-Committees>
3. ~~Delivery Method Form at [https://java.odl.fsu.edu/Curriculum\\_Request\\_Form/main.jsp](https://java.odl.fsu.edu/Curriculum_Request_Form/main.jsp)~~  
Distance Learning Evaluation Guidelines for Use with the Curriculum Request Form at <http://facsenate.fsu.edu/Curriculum-Resources>
4. Distance Learning Courses and Programs at <https://distance.fsu.edu/>
5. ODL Proposal for Distance Course/Program Development Funding at <https://distance.fsu.edu/instructors/developing-and-managing-online-program>
6. ODL Letter of Agreement at <https://distance.fsu.edu/instructors/developing-and-managing-online-program>
7. Guidelines for Distance Auxiliaries at <https://distance.fsu.edu/administrators/auxiliary-budget-management>
8. Auxiliary Budget Templates at <https://budget.fsu.edu/auxiliaries>
9. FSU Course Evaluation Policy at [https://distance.fsu.edu/docs/admin\\_docs/CourseEvaluationPolicy.pdf](https://distance.fsu.edu/docs/admin_docs/CourseEvaluationPolicy.pdf)
10. National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) Manual at <https://www.nc-sara.org/content/sara-manual><sup>[KH2]</sup>
11. FSU Cash Management Policy at <http://policies.vpfa.fsu.edu/policies-and-procedures/financial/4-op-d-2-b-cash-management>  
~~<http://policies.vpfa.fsu.edu/manual/budget.html>~~

### Legal and Other References

Florida Statutes § 1004.09 Florida Higher Education Distance Learning Catalog  
 Florida Statutes § 1009.24 (17) (a) State university student fees  
 Florida Statutes § 1011.47 Auxiliary enterprises; contracts, grants, and donations  
 State University System of Florida Board of Governors (BOG)  
BOG Regulation 7.008 (15) Waiver and Exemptions of Tuition and Fees  
 BOG Regulation 9.013 Auxiliary Operations  
 BOG Regulation 7.001 Tuition and Associated Fees  
 BOG Regulation 7.002 Tuition and Fee Assessment, Collection, Accounting and Remittance  
 BOG Regulation 8.002 Continuing Education  
 Southern Association of Colleges Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement  
 The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) College and University Business Administration (6th edition, 2000)  
 NACUBO Financial Accounting and Reporting Manual

NACUBO Advisory Report 1999-2 Accounting and Reporting for Auxiliary, Auxiliary-Other, and Other Self-Supporting Activities (July 8, 1999)  
Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (May 10, 2004)

### Distance Learning Policy Development Online Resources[KH3]

1. Southern Regional Education Board

1. ~~The Policy Laboratory focused on three overarching themes in distance learning: increase access; improve and ensure quality; and drive down costs.~~ at  
<https://www.sreb.org/overview/distance-learning-policy-lab>

2. [http://www.sreb.org/page/1272/distance\\_learning\\_policy\\_lab.html](http://www.sreb.org/page/1272/distance_learning_policy_lab.html)

3.2. ~~State University System of Florida~~ Florida SUS-Board of Governors at  
<https://www.flbog.edu/universities/>

2.1. <http://www.flbog.org/forstudents/upi/distancelearning.php>

3. ~~Florida Distance Learning Consortium (now the Florida Virtual Campus)~~ at  
<https://www.flvc.org/>

4. Florida Shines at <https://www.floridashines.org/>

3.1. ~~Florida SUS Distance Learning Links~~

~~Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton~~ <http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/distlearn.pdf>

~~Florida Gulf Coast University – Ft. Myers~~

~~Florida International University – Miami~~

~~Florida State University – Tallahassee~~

~~University of Central Florida – Orlando~~

~~University of Florida – Gainesville~~

~~University of North Florida – Jacksonville~~

[http://www.unf.edu/president/policies\\_regulations/02-AcademicAffairs/General/2\\_0450P.aspx](http://www.unf.edu/president/policies_regulations/02-AcademicAffairs/General/2_0450P.aspx)

~~University of South Florida – Tampa~~

~~University of West Florida – Pensacola~~ <http://uwf.edu/atc/AboutUs/distanceLearningGuide.pdf>

Also see the University of Maryland:

~~[http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC\\_DOCUMENTS/DesignIII\\_Off-Campus\\_and\\_distance\\_Programs.htm](http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC_DOCUMENTS/DesignIII_Off-Campus_and_distance_Programs.htm)~~

Library services:

4. ~~Open Access Textbooks (2011)~~

<http://www.openaccesstextbooks.org/pdf/ModelDraft.pdf>

5. ~~The American Distance Education Consortium~~ at

<https://secure.onlinelearningconsortium.org/organizations/profile/american-distance-education-consortium-adecc>