APAC Subcommittee on Distance Education

DRAFT Distance Education Vision Statement

VISION

Distance education courses and programs at Ohio State will be . . .

• Designed to provide greater educational flexibility and further our commitment to educational access, success, affordability, and excellence as a public, R1, land-grant, urban, engaged university.

• Distinguished by their focus on quality, rigor, and value. The same learning outcomes should apply to all delivery modes of any given course such that all modes provide exceptional learning experiences.

• Developed and approved first and foremost by individual academic units in keeping with their curricular goals and vision. Distance education programs or courses that involve multiple units or campuses should be designed and offered collaboratively across units.

• Advertised transparently to students (e.g., stating explicitly what technologies are required, costs, how much of the program or course is online, and whether in-person experiences are required such as field practicums, internships, in-person testing, or in-person labs) and fully supported by student services (such as academic advising and tutoring) delivered in accessible and appropriate forms, including online delivery options.

DEFINITIONS

The following are drawn from HLC and ODHE definitions. For communication with prospective and current students, care should be taken to go beyond these definitions in order to achieve the transparency described in the above “Vision” statement.

Distance Education – Academic instruction that uses one or more of the following technologies: the Internet; one-way and two-way transmission through open broadcast, closed-circuit cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; audio-conferencing; or videocassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs used in conjunction with any of the other technologies.

NOTE: Ohio State interprets “instruction” as formalized instruction.

Distance Course – 75% or more of instruction is offered by distance. Ohio State defines distance courses by two instruction modes:

Distance Learning (DL): 100% of instruction is offered by distance

Distance Enhanced (DH): 75-99% of instruction is offered by distance

Distance Program – 50% or more of the courses offered in a program are distance courses (a program leads to a stand-alone academic or professional degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential)

Hybrid Course – 25%-74% of instruction is offered online (Hybrid Delivery, HY)

In-Person Course – 24% or less of instruction is offered by distance
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<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Potential Change Agents</th>
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<td>We need a clearer vision about what we aim to do with distance education</td>
<td>• <strong>Start a dialogue about what resources chairs and deans need in order to assess the potential for increasing distance education in individual units (OAA working with APAC, ODEE, deans, and chairs)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Assess the level of consensus among units about the institutional vision for distance education and how to manage competing priorities related to that vision (OAA)**</td>
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<td>at the institutional and program level and why.</td>
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<td>We need to increase incentives and support for developing more distance</td>
<td>• <strong>Review the revenue flow model for distance courses and programs (OAA)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Make funding available to support market analysis and marketing for individual units interested in developing new distance programs, including non-degree certificate programs (OAA)<strong>&lt;br&gt;• Consider offering accommodations where necessary for faculty to develop new distance courses and programs that support their unit’s distance education goals (OAA, colleges, and units)</strong></td>
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<td>Strengthen quality assessment and oversight in distance education.</td>
<td>• Assess the need for instructional technology support for individual units (chairs, deans)<strong>&lt;br&gt;• Investigate the potential need for additional testing services for distance courses</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Review APT and POA policies regarding how distance courses count in teaching loads and P&amp;T reviews (OAA, colleges, and TIUs)**&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Create a distance-course teaching award in order to highlight successes and build community among DE instructors (OAA, UTI)</strong></td>
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<th>Increase communication about distance education policies and resources among curricular associate deans and TIUs.</th>
<th>• Create a standing agenda item in APAC meetings for updates about distance education policies, resources, relevant market research about current and future students, and news about any of the action-items listed in this chart (APAC)</th>
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| Assess students’ distance education needs and implement strategies to support their academic success in distance courses and programs. | • Implement surveys and/or focus groups to assess student needs for academic programs and support services (OAA)  
• Review and clarify COAM policies for distance courses, and promote best practices to prevent misconduct in distance course design (COAM, ODEE)  
• Promote transparent marketing and communications to students regarding the specific technology, costs, and in-person work required for each distance program and course (OAA, colleges, units)  
• Promote and support online advising, tutoring, and other relevant services (OAA, colleges, academic units)  
• Expand online support for College Credit Plus, for both high school students as well as high school teachers interested in advanced training in order to teach CCP courses |
| The current budget model creates competition for distance course revenue between regional campuses and Columbus-based units, which impedes distance course and program development. | • Consider implementing the recommendations of the Regional Campus Distance Education Fiscal Committee  
• Columbus units with appropriately credentialed regional faculty should not bar regional campuses from offering distance courses that Columbus offers |
| Consider additional possibilities for the future of distance education at Ohio State. | • Explore the advantages and disadvantages of centralizing administration, marketing, and student support services for distance programs and courses  
• Consider units, programs, and campuses that are currently defined by geographical distances (e.g., Education Abroad, regional campuses, and some internships and service learning); how might distance education redefine them? Could some Education Abroad trips last longer if students concurrently took distance courses offered from Columbus? What might the STEP program look like for online students? Do we need more centralized and coordinated support for our involvement with consortia / collaborations that reach extend beyond the institution?  
• Commit to ongoing assessment of student populations being reached, program offerings, and quality of distance courses and programs |