



Distance Education Format Proposal For A Proposed or Registered Program

Form 4
Version 2014-11-17

When a new or existing program is designed for a [distance education format](#), a campus Chief Executive Officer or Chief Academic Officer should submit a signed cover letter and this completed form to the SUNY Provost at program.review@suny.edu. According to MSCHE, the 50% standard includes only courses offered in their entirety via distance education, not courses utilizing mixed delivery methods. Also, MSCHE requires that the first two programs for which 50% or more is offered through distance education be submitted for Commission review and prior approval of a substantive change.

- All campuses must complete the following sections: Sections 1 - 3, and Part B: Program Specific Issues.
- Part A must be completed if the proposing campus has not previously submitted this form with a completed Part A: Institution-wide Issues, or has made significant changes to its institution-wide distance education operations since last completing Part A. This applies even if the institution has programs registered to be delivered at a distance.

Section 1. General Information	
a) Institutional Information	Institution's 6-digit SED Code : 210500
	Institution's Name: University at Albany
	Address: 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222
b) Registered or Proposed Program	Program Title: Theatre
	SED Program Code : 15125
	Award(s) (e.g., A.A., B.S.): B.A.
	Number of Required Credits: Minimum [120] If tracks or options, largest minimum [120]
	HEGIS Code : 1007
	CIP 2010 Code : 50.0501
c) Distance Education Contact	Name and title: Billie Bennett Franchini, Ph.D., Director of the Institute for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Leadership and Interim Director, Online Teaching & Learning Telephone: (518) 442-4850 E-mail: bfranchini@albany.edu
d) Chief Executive or Chief Academic Officer Approval	Signature affirms that the proposal has met all applicable campus administrative and shared governance procedures for consultation, and the institution's commitment to support the proposed program. <i>E-signatures are acceptable.</i> Name and title: Carol Kim, Ph.D., Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Provost  Signature and date: 6/9/2022
If the program will be registered jointly¹ with one or more other institutions, provide the following information for <u>each</u> institution:	

¹ If the partner institution is non-degree-granting, see SED's [CEO Memo 94-04](#).

	<p>Partner institution's name and 6-digit SED Code:</p>
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Name, title, and signature of partner institution's CEO (or **append** a signed letter indicating approval of this proposal):

Section 2: Enrollment

Year	Anticipated Headcount Enrollment			Estimated FTE
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
1	15		15	15
2	15		15	15
3	15		15	15
4	15		15	15
5	15		15	15

Section 3: Program Information

- a) *Term length* (in weeks) for the distance program: 15
- b) Is this the same as term length for classroom program? [] No [X] Yes
- c) How much "*instructional time*" is required per week per credit for a distance course in this program? (Do not include time spent on activities that would be done outside "class time," such as research, writing assignments, or chat rooms.) **NOTE:** See [SUNY policy on credit/contact hours](#) and [SED guidance](#).

50 minutes

- d) What proportion or percentage of the program will be offered in Distance Education format? Will students be able to complete 100 percent of the program online? If not, what proportion will be able to be completed online?

Students will be able to complete at least 60 percent of the program online.

- e) What is the maximum number of students who would be enrolled in an online course section?

Depending on the nature of the course, enrollment might fluctuate (for instance, performance courses, such as Acting 1/ATHR250Y tend to be smaller than more traditional classroom courses such as Theatre History I/ATHR221), but the average enrollment would be 15.

Part A: Institution-wide Issues: Submit Part A only for the **first** Distance Education program proposed by your institution using this form. SUNY and the State Education Department will keep this in a master file so that your institution will not need to resubmit it for each new proposed online program, **unless there are significant changes, such as a new platform.**

Part A.1. Organizational Commitment

- a) Describe your institution's planning process for Distance Education, including how the need for distance access was identified, the nature and size of the intended audiences, and the provisions for serving those audiences, including how each student's identity will be verified.
- b) Describe your institution's resources for distance learning programs and its student and technical support services to ensure their effectiveness. What course management system does your institution use?

- c) Describe how the institution trains faculty and supports them in developing and teaching online courses, including the pedagogical and communication strategies to function effectively. Describe the qualifications of those who train and/or assist faculty, or are otherwise responsible for online education.
- d) If your institution uses courses or academic support services from **another provider**, describe the process used (with faculty participation) to evaluate their quality, academic rigor, and suitability for the award of college credit and a degree or certificate.
- e) Does your institution have a clear **policy on ownership of course materials** developed for its distance education courses? How is this policy shared with faculty and staff? **NOTE:** You may refer to [SUNY's statement on copyright and faculty ownership of instructional content](#), and/or faculty contract provisions.

Part A.2. Learner Support

- a) Describe how your institution provides distance students with **clear information** on:
 - Program completion requirements
 - The nature of the learning experience
 - Any specific student background, knowledge, or technical skills needed
 - Expectations of student participation and learning
 - The nature of interactions among faculty and students in the courses.
 - Any technical equipment or software required or recommended.
- b) Describe how your institution provides distance learners with adequate **academic and administrative support**, including academic advisement, technical support, library and information services, and other student support services normally available on campus. Do program materials clearly define how students can access these support services?
- c) Describe how **administrative processes** such as admissions and registration are made available to distance students, and how program materials inform students how to access these services.
- d) What **orientation** opportunities and resources are available for students of distance learning?

Part B: Program-Specific Issues: Submit Part B for each new request to add Distance Education Format to a proposed or registered program.

Part B.1. Learning Design

- a) How does your institution ensure that the **same academic standards and requirements** are applied to the program on campus and through distance learning? If the curriculum in the Distance Education program differs from that of the on-ground program, please identify the differences.

The Distant Education Program in Theatre contains the same courses as the in-person program. Each course is adjusted to the distant delivery mode, but need to fulfill the same student learning outcomes as the in-person version. Regardless of the mode of course delivery, the instructor must stay in keeping with the departmental and university standards. Syllabi are collected and placed on file each time the course is taught. A selection of courses are then evaluated annually following a curriculum map in place.

- b) Are the courses that make up the distance learning program offered in a sequence or configuration that allows *timely completion of requirements*?

Yes, each of the Theatre major core courses are offered on a regular basis, either every semester or every other semester. In addition, a selection the upper-level required electives are offered every semester to make sure that students graduate on time.

- c) How do faculty and others ensure that *the technological tools* used in the program are appropriate for the content and intended learning outcomes?

The faculty use the standard platform Blackboard provided by the university. This platform is updated regularly and enables video, student discussion and collaboration, weblinks, and many other resources. In addition, distant courses also utilize synchronous delivery and class participation using Zoom.

- d) How does the program provide for appropriate and flexible interaction between faculty and students, and among students?

Faculty have regular office hours, meetings, as well as video conferences on Zoom and on Blackboard. Students can also utilize getting advisement via Zoom. These technologies are also available in the classrooms, so that students taking the course distantly, can still be present and participate in discussions. These platforms also have live chat functions, blogs or discussion board functions. With the screen sharing function, students can even share their presentations with the class in the classroom, or vice versa. Students also use these technologies to communicate with one another.

- e) How do faculty teaching online courses verify that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit?

The University at Albany has a two- layer authentication and authorization system. Students participating in online learning are required to establish an account and log into the University password protected domain by using their unique NETID. They must also log into Blackboard using their university credentials. Blackboard also uses Safe Assign as a tool to monitor the completion of specific tasks within the LMS Environment.

Part B.2. Outcomes and Assessment

- a) Distance learning programs are expected to produce the *same learning outcomes* as comparable classroom-based programs. How are these learning outcomes identified – in terms of knowledge, skills, or credentials – in course and program materials?

As in-person courses, all online courses will have learning outcomes stated in the course syllabi, in addition to course objectives, content focus, readings, and assignments. Program faculty routinely discuss and revise the course syllabi and student learning outcomes, for both the in-person and online formats, based on program assessments and evidence of student learning.

- b) Describe how the *means chosen for assessing student learning* in this program are appropriate to the content, learning design, technologies, and characteristics of the learners.

Like in-person courses, all distant courses have assessments aligned to our student learning outcomes. The assessments are specific to the course goals and may involve papers, exams, online quizzes, discussion posts on Blackboard, presentations (including recorded and uploaded or delivered synchronously over Zoom), and other items suitable for the particular course. With performance courses, such as Acting or Voice, for example, assessment includes live Zoom presentations of scenes, coordinated with scene-partner. The assessments require integration, application, and analysis of course content.

Part B.3. Program Evaluation

- a) What process is in place to monitor and **evaluate the effectiveness** of this particular distance education program on a regular basis?

The effectiveness of distance education courses will be evaluated based on the yearly assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, the same way as the department does for in-person courses.

- b) How will the evaluation results be used for **continuous program improvement**?

A faculty committee will meet to discuss the results of our yearly self-evaluation, will make recommendations for program improvement. There will also be made recommendations for improvement of the program by the Chair and Program Director, based on student evaluations (SIRF)s.

- c) How will the evaluation process assure that the **program results in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth** of the college degree or certificate awarded?

The evaluation process is based on the yearly assessment of the Student Learning Outcomes, which meet university standards. Also, in order to maintain the program accreditation, all courses must meet accreditation standards. The courses must meet university requirements for rigor and breadth required of undergraduate coursework, including credits, format, and assignments needed for a BA degree in a liberal arts context.

Part B.4. Students Residing Outside New York State

SUNY programs must comply with all "[authorization to operate" regulations](#) that are in place in other U.S. states where the institution has enrolled students or is otherwise active, based on each state's definitions.

- a) What processes are in place to monitor the U.S. state of residency of students enrolled in any distance education course in this program while residing in their home state?

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) process allows the University at Albany to deliver our online programs in states outside New York. SARA is a voluntary agreement among its member states and U.S. territories that establishes one set of national standards and regulations for offering postsecondary distance education courses and programs. This agreement is administered by four regional educational compacts and overseen by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

New York is a member of SARA and the University at Albany is an approved SARA institution. We adhere to the established SARA standards for offering online education among member states, districts and territories. As a result, our online students benefit from expanded access to educational offerings, an enhanced quality of distance education and better resolution of any complaints.

- b) Federal regulations require institutions delivering courses by distance education to provide students or prospective students with contact information for filing complaints with the state approval or licensing entity in the student's state of residency and any other relevant state official or agency that would appropriately handle a student's complaint. What is the URL on your institution's website where contact information for filing complaints for students in this program is posted?

<https://www.albany.edu/online/non-nys-residents.php>