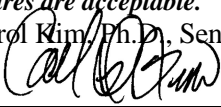# Distance Education Format Proposal
For A Proposed or Registered Program
Form 4
Version 2014-11-17

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:	History
	SED Program Code	03062
	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:	2205
	CIP 2010 Code:	54.0199
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 for Online Teaching and Learning	
	Telephone: (518) 442-4850 E-mail: brfranchini@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. *E-signatures are acceptable.***	
	Name and title: Carol Kim, Ph.D., Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Provost	
	Signature and date: *[signature]* 8/19/2021	
	If the program will be registered jointly[1] with one or more other institutions, provide the following information for each institution:	
	Partner institution's name and 6-digit SED Code:	
	Name, title, and signature of partner institution's CEO (or **append** a signed letter indicating approval of this proposal):	

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

Section 2: Enrollment

| | Anticipated Headcount Enrollment | | | Estimated FTE |
Year	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
1	35		35	
2	35		35	
3	35		35	
4	35		35	
5	35		35	

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?

   100 percent

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

   48

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.

Any new courses proposed to the History department must be first presented to the History Undergraduate Committee via a Course Action Form (which subsequently goes through review at the Department, College and University levels). The syllabi are scrutinized to make sure that they are in keeping with departmental and university standards. Once a course has been approved and included in the university catalogue, the instructor can choose which mode of delivery (whether in person, online, or hybrid). 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 yearly in the Annual

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment. The curriculum for Distance Education will remain the same as our on-ground program.

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

Yes, courses are offered on a regular basis, either every semester or every other semester. Each student has a professional advisor who will work with students and advise them which semester to take specific courses. The program can be completed in the same amount of time as the face-to-face program.

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. Each course will be reviewed at the conclusion of each semester and decisions on if the technology was appropriate or not will be reviewed by faculty. If changes need to be made, they will be updated on the syllabus before the start of the next semester.

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

Students are assigned a History Department faculty advisor who they can always contact. They will also have frequent communications from the History Department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. In the classroom, faculty will have a wide range of technologies available to them for communicating with students, including e-mail, phone, Blackboard and video conferencing technologies, such as Zoom, and student chat opportunities through Slack. Students will also have access to these technologies for communicating 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?

Learning outcomes are required on all History course syllabi. All distance learning students, like in-person students, will receive a copy of the syllabus during the first week of class.

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.

All 100-, 200-, 300-, and Captone-level History courses comply with SUNY General Education oral discourse, critical thinking, writing, and information literacy requirements. Online courses, like in-person courses, assess student learning using research and writing assignments that comply with General Education requirements at their corresponding levels. We use writing as the principal means of assessing student learning, which mirrors the ways historians convey their research to a wider audience. Submitting writing assignments dovetails seamlessly with course management systems like Blackboard, which allow for paper submissions and online written discussions. And writing provides a familiar way for all of our students—both those online and in-person—to demonstrate their learning.

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 History Department conducts a yearly undergraduate course assessment in its Student Learning Outcomes Annual Report. In that yearly assessment we evaluate the effectiveness of both our in-person and online courses. In addition, the department's Undergraduate Committee continually assesses the effectiveness of the entire undergraduate program. This includes ongoing assessments of both the in-person and online programs. The chair also reviewers the teaching evaluations of all instructors every year.

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

The History Department's Undergraduate Committee will meet to discuss the results of our yearly self-evaluation, will make recommendations for program improvement, and those recommendations will be shared with the wider department's full-time faculty who will then have the ability to vote on proposed program improvements. This will happen on a yearly basis. The chair can make recommendations based on the course evaluations.

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?

Results from the History Department's Student Learning Outcomes Annual Report will be shared with the faculty. If the report shows that learning outcomes are not in keeping with the departmental and university-wide learning outcomes foreach level, the department faculty will be notified.

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 <u>National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)</u>.

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

Complaint Resolution for Online Out-of-State Students

Students who reside outside of New York State and who are enrolled in online courses or programs at the University at Albany may submit a grievance to the New York State Education Department only after completing the complaint process established by UAlbany.

- Academic Grievance Procedure for Graduate Students

- Academic Grievance Procedure for Undergraduate Students

If a student is unable to resolve a complaint through the proper institutional process, they may contact the New York State Education Department to file a complaint:

Office of College and University Evaluation
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234
518-474-1551
IHEauthorize@nysed.gov