




# 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](mailto: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	
<b>a) Institutional Information</b>	Institution's 6-digit <a href="#">SED Code</a> : 210500
	Institution's Name: University at Albany
	Address: 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222
<b>b) Registered or Proposed Program</b>	Program Title: Computer Science
	<a href="#">SED Program Code</a> 86075
	<a href="#">Award(s)</a> (e.g., A.A., B.S.): B.A.
	Number of Required Credits: Minimum [ 120 ] If tracks or options, largest minimum [ 120 ]
	<a href="#">HEGIS Code</a> : 0701
	<a href="#">CIP 2010 Code</a> : 11.0701
<b>c) Distance Education Contact</b>	Name and title: Billie Bennett Franchini Ph.D., Director of the Institute for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Leadership and Interim Director of Online Teaching and Learning  Telephone: (518) 442-4850 E-mail: bfranchini@albany.edu
<b>d) Chief Executive or Chief Academic Officer Approval</b>	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: 4/8/2022
	<b>If the program will be registered jointly<sup>1</sup> with one or more other institutions, provide the following information for each institution:</b>
	Partner institution's name and 6-digit <a href="#">SED Code</a> :  Name, title, and signature of partner institution's CEO (or <b>append</b> a signed letter indicating approval of this proposal):

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

## Section 2: Enrollment

Year	Anticipated Headcount Enrollment			Estimated FTE
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
1	7	2	9	8
2	17	4	21	19
3	27	6	32	30
4	37	8	45	41
5	47	10	57	52

## Section 3: Program Information

- a) **Term length** (in weeks) for the distance program: *15 weeks, equivalent to our traditional semester.*
- 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](#).

*55 minutes per credit hour for lectures and 120 minutes per credit hour for labs*

- 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?

*50% of the program will be able to be completed online, or 22 credits.*

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

*45 students*

**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 Computer Science Department ensures this through regular faculty meetings, collaboration with the university's Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership, and the review of student feedback in the form of general surveys or official evaluation reports completed at the end of each semester. There are no differences in curriculum between the on-ground in the classroom program and the distance education 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, these courses are offered in a sequence that follows our pre-requisite/co-requisite schedule. The aim of our programs, regardless of modality, is to offer coursework with a frequency that does not hinder a student's*

momentum towards degree completion. The department works with academic advisors and the Registrar's office to facilitate this.

- 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 distance learning that occurred during the height of the pandemic has prepared the department to enable student success in a variety of modalities. Faculty were surveyed on the tools needed to facilitate a successful transition to synchronous learning and the department worked with our Information Technology Services team and other university units to provide requested the hardware and software. The university classrooms are equipped to broadcast lessons simultaneously to students both in-person and at a distance.*

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

*Faculty members and Teaching Assistants that instruct at a distance are required to hold virtual office hours. Students registered for a hybrid course (defined as a course offered both in-person and online) may also attend in-person office hours if they would prefer, and our advisors can meet with students both in-person or virtually. Department administration can facilitate interactions both in-person and virtually.*

- 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 utilizes two layers of authorization and authentication for students who participate in online learning. Students are required to establish an account and to log in to the University password protected domain using the NETID protocol and must also log into the BLS Learning Management System using their university credentials. Blackboard also uses Safe Assign as a tool to monitor the completion of certain 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?

*Program Educational Objectives were created by program constituents and our faculty, regardless of program modality. These learning objectives are reviewed every six years with the primary goal of determining if these outcomes, when achieved, meet the needs of the constituencies. Our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee initiates the review process and modifies the Program Educational Objectives (learning objectives) as necessary before presenting to faculty for discussion. An external College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Resource and Advisory Council also provide feedback on Program Educational Objectives.*

*Each course's learning objectives are reviewed regularly to ensure they are correctly adding to the Program Educational Objectives as appropriate to the course's topic and rigor level. Learning Outcomes will be within each course's syllabus which will be posted within the course's Blackboard site. Students will be able to view and print the syllabus throughout the semester.*

- 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.

*Student Outcomes are assessed directly via a set of Performance Indicators. These Performance Indicators serve to operationalize our Student Outcomes. Each Student Outcome is linked with 2 to 3 Performance Indicators.*

*Performance Indicators are measured via a variety of assessments tools including exams, papers, assignments, and group projects.*

### **Part B.3. Program Evaluation**

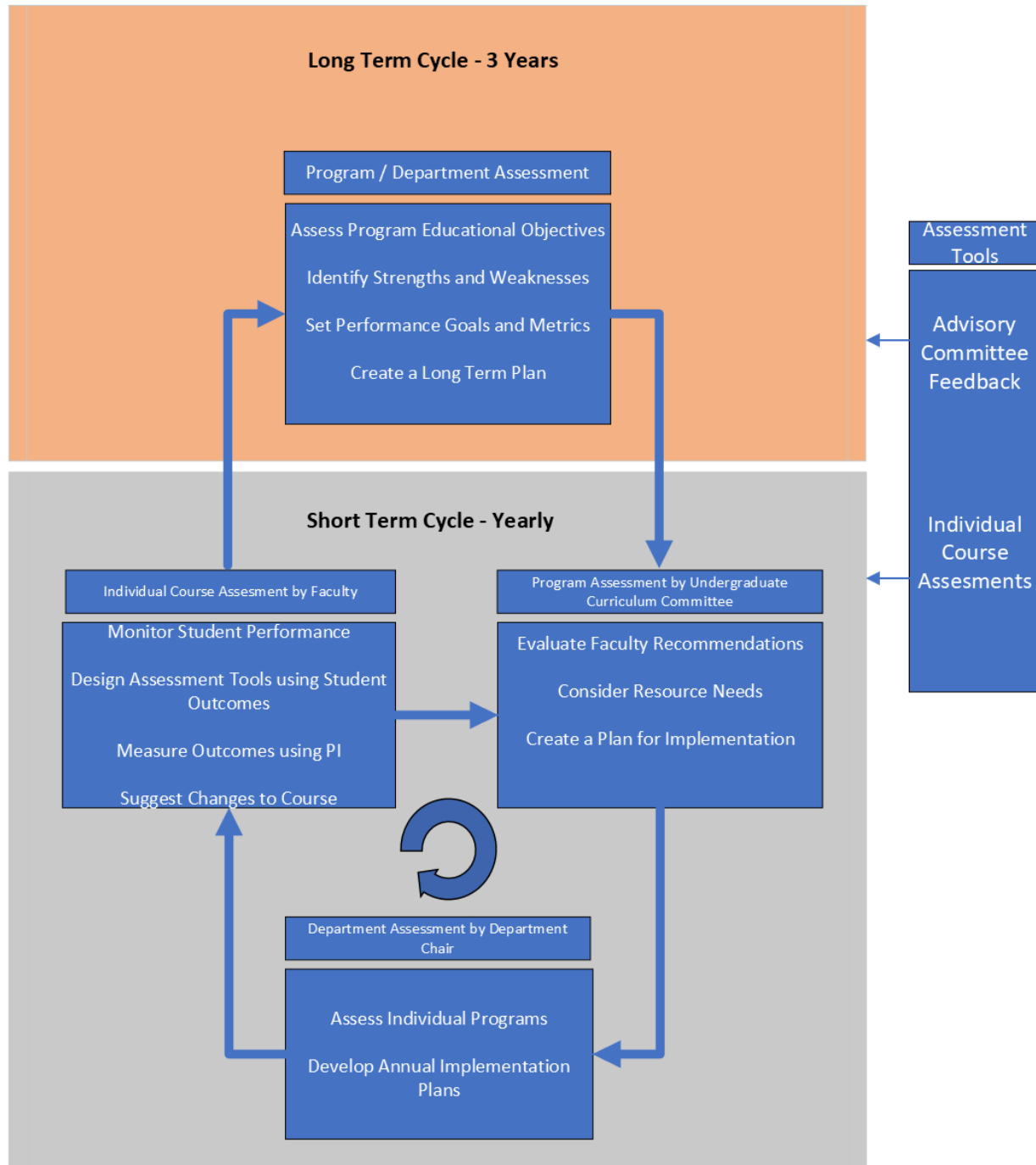
- a) What process is in place to monitor and ***evaluate the effectiveness*** of this particular distance education program on a regular basis?

*The effectiveness of our program is determined by a combination of student satisfaction surveys, an industry-led advisory board, and the rate at which students successfully attain Student Outcomes.*

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

*The department utilizes an improvement plan that consists of both short-term (1-year) and long-term (3-year) feedback cycles. Please see the below chart for more information.*

## Continuous Improvement Cycle



- 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?

*Our Undergraduate Curriculum Committee convenes once a semester to review student achievement in relation to Student Outcomes. Adjustments to curriculum and assessments are made based on student performance. This comprehensive assessment, along with our collaboration with an external advisory board consisting of industry*

professionals, assures that our learning outcomes are appropriate to the rigor and breadth the Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science requires.

#### **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?

*Distance learning students will be flagged in our integrated administrative system. This will allow regular querying so that we can identify any out of state students who participate from their home state. The University is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA). This is a voluntary agreement among member states and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance-education courses and programs. As a member institution, the University is approved to offer distance education courses to students outside of New York.*

- 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>