MEMORANDUM

TO: James Mower, Senate Chair

FROM: Havidán Rodríguez, President

DATE: October 31, 2018

SUBJECT: Senate Bill Approval

I am pleased to approve the following Senate Bill, which was recommended following approval by the University Senate at its meeting of October 15, 2018:

Senate Bill 1819-01: PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN COMMUNICATION

Approved: _____

Havidán Rodríguez, President

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 SUNY
	Address:	*1400 Washington Ave, Albany, NY 12222*
b) **Registered or Proposed Program**	Program Title:	Online Graduate Certificate in Organizational or Strategic Communication
	SED Program Code	15128
	Award(s) (e.g., A.A., B.S.):	Advanced Certificate
	Number of Required Credits:	Minimum [12] If tracks or options, largest minimum [ ]
	HEGIS Code:	0601
	CIP 2010 Code:	09.0101
c) **Distance Education Contact**	Name and title: Jon Bartow, Vice Dean for Graduate Education Telephone: 518 437 5062 E-mail: jbartow@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: James R. Stellar, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Signature and date:	
	If the program will be registered jointly[1] with one or more other institutions, provide the following information for each institution:	

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

Year	Anticipated Headcount Enrollment			Estimated FTE
	Full-time	**Part-time**	**Total**	
1	0	1 - 2		0.5 - 1
2	0	3 - 4		1.5 - 2
3	0	5 - 6		2.5 - 3
4	0	7 - 8		3.5 - 4
5	0	9 - 10		4.5 - 5

Section 3: Program Information

a) **Term length** (in weeks) for the distance program:

   15 weeks

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.*

   1 hour per week per credit

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% of the Graduate Certificate program will be offered in Distance Education format.
   Yes, students will be able to complete 100% of the program online.

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

   20

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?

Most interactions among faculty and students will be through Blackboard and email. Additionally, at the instructor's discretion, faculty may engage with students through text messaging/SMS, video conferencing, telephone and when appropriate face-to-face conferencing.

- Any technical equipment or software required or recommended.

   Connectivity to MyUAlbany and Blackboard at UAlbany is required, necessitating that students have access to web-enabled devices such as tablets or computers.

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?

All UAlbany students have a personal account through MyUAlbany. The University uses this online portal to provide information and support to all students concerning advising, finances, access to library resources and email.

Technical support is provided to faculty, students and staff by the Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk team. The Help desk provides support in person, by phone and through online channels (email, web form, remote assistance). The Help Desk is staffed from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. When the Help Desk is closed, students are able to access online support resources, including instructions, FAQ, and tutorials via the UAlbany website. Additionally, students can submit inquiries and help requests by phone and via the Web.

The campus provides technical and instructional support for the faculty and students through professional units in both Information Technology (ITS) with its Educational Technology Center (ETC), and Academic Affairs.

- ITS Service Desk

   Both phone messages and online requests are logged electronically by ITS. This allows the HelpDesk staff to respond to requests the following business day and maintains a record of communication and resolution of technical support incidents. https://www.albany.edu/its/help-request.html

- The Educational Technology Center (ETC)

   ETC is a central hub providing access to a range of IT services, including educational technology consulting for classroom and online teaching, video recording services, test scanning, classroom technology support, and assistance with learning management systems like Blackboard, VoiceThread and Ensemble Video.

- AskIT Wiki

   Self-help resources are available on the AskIT Wiki and provides procedural and tutorial assistance with the full range of UAlbany Information Technology Services at:
   https://wiki.albany.edu/display/public/askit/Information+Technology+Services+askIT

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.

Application and information concerning admission is fully available online at www.albany.edu/admissions. Once admitted, the UAlbany welcome webpage and MyUAlbany provide follow-up information for students to prepare for classes and student life.

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 Blackboard Learning Management System using their university credentials. Blackboard also uses SafeAssign as a to tool to monitor the completion of certain tasks in the learning management system 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?

The online courses will follow the same standards for syllabi of course offered by the department. These syllabi outline necessary knowledge, skills or credentials in course and program materials. Many of the on-campus classroom courses make use of Blackboard and other ITS resources, assignments, readings, examinations, quizzes, assignments and other course materials are routinely made available or are distributed online. Our online courses routinely mirror this current organization of such courses to achieve the same learning outcomes.

We are keenly aware that for graduate courses, the learning outcomes must be consistent across all course formats, both face-to-face and online.

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.

Assessing student learning in the online environment will be equivalent to assessing the student in a face-to-face environment. Neither our classroom versions nor our online courses rely on high-stakes exams that are incompatible with the asynchronous online pedagogy employed in the program. All course activities can be successfully completed and assessed online. In general, learners are required to demonstrate developing understanding through a variety of assessments that include written and occasionally multimedia work in various forms with formative and summative feedback provided by the instructor.

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 Department of Communication is a community of researchers and educators with the mission of advancing fundamental knowledge about processes of human communication, and preparing students to analyze and participate in communication practices in a variety of social contexts. The Department has a distinctive commitment to engaged scholarship—at the community level and in the larger context of participation in institutions of a democratic society—and to engaged teaching and learning.

We routinely monitor the effectiveness of our graduate course offerings by directly assessing professionally oriented students' ability to apply knowledge of theory and research to understanding and explaining communication phenomena within practical contexts and to propose courses of action designed to achieve relevant communication-related goals. Additionally, we will monitor students' ability to apply their knowledge

UAlbany is a member of NC-SARA. The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement is a voluntary agreement among its member states and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance-education courses and programs. Through its membership in NC-SARA UAlbany commits to follow national standard procedures of membership and resolution of issues.

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? *NOTE: Links to information for other states can be found at here.*

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