

Section 2: Enrollment

Year	Anticipated Headcount Enrollment			Estimated FTE
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
1	50	10	60	55
2	50	10	60	55
3	50	10	60	55
4	50	10	60	55
5	50	10	60	55

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](#).

The online classes are designed to be equivalent in terms of instructional time and total material covered to the face-to-face classes. For three-credit courses, this amounts to 15 weeks at 150 minutes per week.

- 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 of the program could be completed online, depending on the electives that are chosen.
- e) What is the maximum number of students who would be enrolled in an online course section?
- A maximum of 40 students will be enrolled per section, depending on the pedagogical needs of the course.

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 curriculum for the distance education program is the same as the campus-based version. The courses have the same template/syllabi, instructors, and requirements, except where particular assignments need to be adjusted for the format. All of the instructors for this program are instructors who might teach (and often have taught) the same courses in person.

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

Courses will be offered on a regular basis to allow timely completion of the requirements. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor who works with them to make sure that they are on track to complete the program in a timely manner. The course schedule is planned by a committee which includes the department chair and undergraduate program director. This committee meets on a routine basis. Each fall, the schedule for the following academic year is finalized. At the same time, a tentative schedule for the year after that is prepared. Each semester, the committee meets to determine priorities for summer and winter session courses, and to make any final adjustments before the start of each semester.

- 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 which is provided by the University. This platform is updated regularly and enables video, student discussion and collaboration, weblinks, and many other resources. Faculty also regularly use Zoom to interact with students.

Faculty draw on training support from several resources at UAlbany, including the Educational Technology Center (ETC), the Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL), and the Office of Online Teaching and Learning (OTL). Adjunct instructors, including PhD-student instructors, for online courses must either have taught online previously or participate in an ITLAL or other preparatory workshop prior to the start of the course.

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

Students are able to interact with their instructor and classmates through Blackboard and Zoom. Courses typically include substantial faculty-student and student-student interaction through discussion boards and team projects. Faculty may also use online platforms such as Zoom during office hours to connect with students who are unable to meet in person.

- 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 log into 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?

As with face to face courses, all online courses will have learning objectives/outcomes stated in course syllabi, in addition to course goals, content focus, readings, and assignments. Program faculty routinely discuss and revise the course syllabi and student learning outcomes, for both the campus 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.

All the courses have assessments aligned to our student learning outcomes. The assessments are specific to the course goals and may involve papers, proctored exams (including online proctoring services, if needed), online quizzes, discussion posts, problem sets, presentations (including recorded and uploaded or delivered over Zoom), and other items suitable for the particular course. 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?

Distance education courses will be evaluated based on an assessment of student competencies, which is the same process as for our in-person program.

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

The assessments of student competencies identify areas for improvement. If student competencies are not met, faculty will meet to determine necessary modifications to courses.

If individual teaching evaluations suggest challenges, the chair and/or undergraduate program director will meet with the relevant faculty member. The feedback will be assessed and if necessary modifications will be recommended.

- 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 tied to learning objectives/outcomes. In order to maintain the program accreditation, all courses must meet accreditation standards. In addition, the courses meet university requirements for rigor and breadth required of undergraduate coursework, including credits, format, and assignments needed for a graduate degree.

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 University at Albany monitors and verifies residency for all students, regardless of the format of the courses in which they are enrolled (online or face-to-face). Distance learning students will be flagged in our integrated administrative system (IAS). 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>