



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 59.02, **Online and Distance Education**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to specify how online and distance delivered instruction in for-credit courses shall be conducted.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by September of 1 every even-numbered year (ENY) by the associate vice president of information technology and chief information officer (CIO), deans of the schools and the vice president for academic affairs or designee, with recommendations for revisions submitted to the Academic Council for approval by November 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

I. Foreword.

- A. The Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter P, Rule 4.257 provides definitions for "distance education," "distance education course," "fully distance education course," "hybrid/blended course," and "distance education degree or certificate program". "Distance education" is defined as "the formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction". This definition also applies to specific courses in which the majority of the instruction occurs when the students and instructor are not in the same physical setting. In this policy, distance education and electronically delivered instruction are used interchangeably and apply to relevant courses.
- B. Unless otherwise specified below, all current policies that apply to face-to-face delivery of academic coursework shall also apply to coursework that is delivered online or with distance education formats.

II. Procedures.

- A. Educational Support
 1. All TTUHSC El Paso students who apply for admission to or are enrolled in an academic program or educational program that includes coursework delivered in online or distance education formats shall be provided appropriate access to student support services. These services shall include online access to admissions, orientation, academic advising, course registration, textbook lists and course materials, financial aid, technical assistance, and related services. Students seeking accommodations as applicable under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 must register with the Academic Success and Accessibility Office in the Office of Student Services and Student Engagement and file appropriate documentation in

order to be eligible for any disability benefits and services described in HSCEP OP 77.14.

2. The TTUHSC El Paso library shall provide support for all courses and programs regardless of delivery modality (e.g. face-to-face, hybrid/blended, fully online).
3. Elements of library support available to students taking education courses include electronic document delivery, electronic journals, full-text databases, end-user searching, reference assistance and instruction, network access, and interlibrary loan services.
4. All TTUHSC El Paso students shall have access to appropriate institutional academic technology support regardless of delivery modality.
5. All TTUHSC El Paso faculty members who teach shall be provided professional support in adopting appropriate instructional techniques and strategies to deliver, maintain, and facilitate student learning. Such support shall be provided through the Office of Faculty Development and by each school and/or program within TTUHSC El Paso.

B. Coordination and Oversight

1. eLearning Committee

Representatives will be appointed by the vice president for academic affairs with recommendations solicited from the deans of the schools and the associate vice president of information technology and chief information officer to the eLearning Committee. Appointments will be reviewed annually or more often as needed. This committee shall be responsible for the following aspects of electronically delivered, technology-assisted, hybrid/blended, fully online, and distance delivered instruction, including:

- a) recommending the allocation of institutional resources to support instructional needs;
- b) promoting best practices in the use of academic technologies towards improving student learning outcomes;
- c) providing guidance for the staff supporting the Learning Management Systems (LMS);
- d) approving web-page material related to support services and academic program offerings, etc.;
- e) ensuring compliance with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) requirements.

The eLearning Committee will report to the vice president for academic affairs and the Academic Council as relevant.

2. Schools

Each school will ensure:

- a) adherence to requirements of the SACSCOC related to electronically-delivered instruction and the THECB's "Principles of Good Practice for Academic Degree and Certificate Programs and Credit Courses Offered Electronically" and related regulations and guidance;
- b) identification of resource needs and allocation of resources to support courses delivered in online, distance and technology-assisted education formats;
- c) facilitation of support services for students and faculty within the schools who are engaged in online, distance and technology-assisted instruction;
- d) assistance to programs in the development and/or revision of curricula; and
- e) identification of data and assessments needed to evaluate the effectiveness of online, distance and technology-assisted instruction.

C. Programs, Course Offerings, and Ownership of Instructional Materials

- 1. Faculty within schools are responsible for deciding which courses and/or programs will be offered and the most appropriate modality (e.g. face-to-face, hybrid/blended, fully online).
- 2. Faculty within schools are responsible for ensuring the academic rigor of programs and the quality of instruction in all courses and/or programs.
- 3. Faculty members are responsible for ensuring the integrity of student work in courses and programs.
- 4. Proposals for new courses and/or programs shall be developed, reviewed, and approved in the same manner as proposals for face-to-face courses and/or programs and approvals must be secured at the school level and through the relevant approval processes coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs.
- 5. Ownership of instructional materials that are developed for courses and the revenue derived from the creation of software or other media products that are developed for instructional purposes shall be determined in accordance with Regents' Rules and Policy Statement, Chapter 10, Intellectual Property Rights.

D. Assessment

- 1. Each course in which students are enrolled shall be evaluated by the students. Additional response items on student evaluations shall assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery systems, academic resources and student services.
- 2. The educational effectiveness of all programs is part of the on-going institutional effectiveness processes. Elements covered in assessments shall include student learning outcomes, student performance on programmatic assessments, student satisfaction with the course and technology, student persistence in the degree program, and program outcomes (e.g., pass rates on licensing exams) as appropriate.

3. Instructors of record for courses classified by the THECB as “hybrid/blended” and “fully online” shall review the THECB “Principles of Good Practice” (PGP)¹ documentation and review course(s) for PGP alignment.
4. Instructors of record for courses classified as distance education should consult the SACSCOC Distance and Correspondence Policy Statement² to ensure that all requirements are met.

¹ <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agencypublication/miscellaneous/principles-of-good-practice-for-academic-degreeand-certificate-programs-and-credit-courses-offered-at-a-distance/SACSCOC> THECB, Principles of Good Practice: SACSCOC Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement: <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/07/DistanceCorrespondenceEducation.pdf>