

Policy Name

4.4204 Online Course and Education Policy

Purpose and Scope

Regulatory and educational standards for online education have evolved and this policy is necessary to ensure that Alvernia University practices meet these standards. The Alvernia University Online Course and Education Policy provides the framework for the institution's online education courses and programs, and by extension student learning in this modality. This policy applies to all Alvernia University Online courses and Hybrid courses, other than Face-to-Face Web Enhanced courses, as well as to all Alve <u>Hybrid Course</u>: An individual course that utilizes both face-to-face and online modalities. Specifically, Alvernia University 70% of the contact hours are online.

Instructional Designer (ID): one who provides technical and course design assistance to Faculty in the process of course development.

Learning Management System (LMS): A software application used for the development and delivery of educational courses and programs.

: An individual course that delivers more than 70% of its content electronically.

<u>Online Education</u>: The regulatory definition of online education is provided in the <u>22 Pa. Code §31.2</u> definition for Distance Education: An alternate format to resident-based instruction for offering education courses or series of courses by an approved postsecondary educational institution, consortium of institutions or educational enterprise, for which credit is offered or awarded toward a certificate, diploma or degree, which has as its primary mode of delivery one or more of the following:

- < Correspondence.
- < Television.
- < Videocassette or disk.
- < Film.
- < Radio.
- Computer.
- Devices built upon an audio-video format.
- C Other supportive devices using current or future technology.

academic credit when the Faculty is physically located at an address that differs from the physical location of the student at the time of instruction, whether for an entire course or a segment of the course.

Online Learning Instruction Certification Program



All academic degree and credential programs must comply with the guidelines of Alvernia and the Pennsylvania Department of Education Department (PDE) pertaining to program registration. For example, any program that enables students to complete 50% or more of the program via online education, must secure approval to do so from Alvernia through the curriculum approval process by working with the Office of the Provost and the Accreditation Liaison Officer to register with MSCHE. The institution must meet MSCH

accrediting bodies. The processes for seeking approval for new online programs and program revisions are built into the curriculum management system (e.g., Ourriculog).

Online Education Course Development and Approval

Faculty seeking to propose a new hybrid or online course or convert a face-to-face course to hybrid or online delivery,

member must submit either a new course or course change proposal through the curriculum management system (e.g., Ourriculog). The respective committee, either the Ourriculum Committee or the Graduate Academic Council, will consult with an Alvernia University ID to determine the appropriateness of the online learning designation. Once the course has received the appropriate approvals in the curriculum process, the ID then gives the faculty access to a template course shell for preparing the course materials for online delivery. The faculty works further with the ID on the action plan for developing or converting the course based on the intended delivery date.

Online Readiness Review

Before delivery of a new or converted course, a review must be performed by the ID with the Faculty or SME, using an Alvernia approved Course Quality Rubric (CQR). Only after the ID and Faculty or SME agree 30 147.55 12.5 .h the Faculty or S4tpE

Departments offering online education courses must follow existing prerequisite restrictions and procedures for preenrollment and enrollment. Because online media vary in delivery and technical sophistication, and because students enrolled in online education courses must often assume much greater independent responsibility, special restrictions such as technical skills, equipment, cohort requirements, and other expectations may be required as conditions of enrollment in a course or programs. All Alvernia students must have access to computers meeting Faculty in a Hybrid Course must make clear to students (i) the days and times that students can expect the Faculty to be active or present in the course, (ii) the days and times the course will be face-to-face, (iv) the days face-to-face components of blended courses are on the ground, allowing room-scheduling by the registrar, and (v) the expected response time from faculty to student queries by stating such response time in their syllabi. Faculty teaching online and hybrid education courses, other than web-enhanced courses, must also publish in their syllabi the days and times of their Faculty teaching online and hybrid

education courses, other than web-enhanced courses, must offer online office hours, but should consider both online and face-to-face office hours to meet student needs.

Verification of Student Identity

Ensuring that a student who registers in an online education course or program is the same student who participates in, completes and receives academic credit for a course or program is a requirement of the <u>United States Federal Higher</u> <u>Education Opportunity Act</u>, <u>Public Law 110-315</u>. Faculty must follow the established policy and procedure set forth below for verifying student identity in online and hybrid courses. Student privacy must be protected in the process, and students must receive information at registration about any additional costs associated with the verification procedures.

Student Services

Support for students taking online education courses includes, but is not limited to, the following areas: academic advisement, accessibility resources, bookstore, career development, enrollment, registration, financial aid, library, technical help, and tutoring. Faculty are required to apprise students of available services. It is expected that personnel responsible for these services will make appropriate and reasonable efforts, within the limits of available staff and resources, to accommodate online education students as is done for students in face-to-face courses.

Student Course Evaluations

Online and hybrid courses will be evaluated by students according to the same evaluation provided in face-to-face courses, delivered online in the case of online courses and delivered online or face-to-face as determined by the timing of the face-to-face sessions.

Assessment

used to enhance the attainment of institutional goals for student learning. Online education courses are expected to produce the same learning outcomes as comparable face-to-face courses. These learning outcomes must be clearly specified in course syllabi and program literature.

Course Archives and Record-Keeping

courses will be archived in electronic format for at least one year following their completion. Faculty can request access to these archived formats (for courses for which the faculty member is the instructor of record) at any time through the Information Technology Help Desk.

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