

In accordance with Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Policy No. 2:05:00:00 Pellissippi State Community College recognizes the opportunities for delivering quality education through the use of modern telecommunication and computer technology and encourages departments to take advantage of such opportunities in carrying out their program goals. In the implementation of such instructional delivery there must be adequate controls to assure quality in instruction and management.

I. Definition

Distance education occurs when there is physical separation of the teacher and learner and when communication and instruction take place through, or are supported by, any technological means such as telephone, radio, television, computers, satellite delivery, interactive video, or any combination of present and future telecommunication technologies. Distance learning does not include traditional classroom or laboratory courses which may use or require computers, audio visual or other materials as part of or in support of education.

Learning Management System (LMS) is a web- accessible software application that provides for the administration of course content, delivery of assessments, communication and collaboration between students and instructors, and the ability to track grades and other relevant performance data.

Conventional or Face-to-Face courses meet in a classroom or laboratory at scheduled times for the duration established by Pellissippi State policies and practice.

Hybrid courses combine face-to-face classroom instruction with online activities. These courses will meet face-to-face at a scheduled time throughout the semester for instruction and have a significant proportion of instruction online that utilizes the LMS adopted by Pellissippi State. The meeting time and location for Hybrid courses will follow Pellissippi State policies and practices.

Synchronous courses allow for distribution of live lectures through video conferencing technology. This allows course instruction to occur through two-way audio and video interaction at Distance Learning Classrooms or other remote access locations. Synchronous classes meet at scheduled times for the duration established by Pellissippi State policies and practices.

Online courses are taught 100% online with no face-to-face instruction. Online courses are mostly asynchronous but may include limited synchronous activities that comply with the Distance Education Faculty Handbook. Online courses will utilize the LMS adopted by Pellissippi State. The delivery of exams will follow procedures set forth below, including the authentication of online test takers and the use of online proctoring tools or live local proctors.

Class Attendance in distance learning courses will be determined by the active participation of the student through the completion of class activities, such as the submission of an assignment, completion of an exam, attendance in an online chat, or the posting to a discussion forum. The act of logging in to the course in the learning management system is not considered attendance.

II. Online Leadership Team

The Online Leadership Team (OLT) serves as a recommending body to the College on matters related to online and other distance education courses including online student support and success, online faculty support and training, online education policies and procedures, and other areas pertaining to distance education that promote the mission of Pellissippi State Community College.

III. Standards of Quality

Distance learning activities will be guided by the SACSCOC “Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs.” Courses offered through distance learning must meet the same quality standards maintained in all credit and non-credit instruction. Specifically, courses taught in this mode must meet quality standards set forth in college policies relative to course review and approval, faculty evaluation, student performance, teacher-student interaction, and support services.

Faculty are to meet the training and course expectations specified in the Distance Education Faculty Handbook.

IV. Administration of Distance Education Courses

The Policies and Procedures for the Administration of Distance Education Courses at Pellissippi State are intended to

- Assure up-to-date course materials and information
- Provide consistency to advance student learning
- Allow instructors to focus on teaching rather than technology
- Allow for iterative course design development
- Provide clear communication channels between students, faculty and administration
- Allow for appropriate technology support
- Assure compliance with accessibility requirements

A. Instructors of distance education courses are required to utilize technologies that protect student confidentially in accordance with Pellissippi State Policy 04:03:00. At a minimum, utilized technologies must

- protect identifiable student information
- protect student academic information
- preserve student academic records
- meet accessibility requirements
- permit authorized College personnel access to student records

New technologies and instructional platforms or tools should be vetted for academic appropriateness by relevant faculty. All cloud-based technologies must be approved by vice president of Information Services and adhere to college policy [08:13:14 Cloud Computing](#). The vetting process should include other information technology, educational technology, academic, and accessibility staff as appropriate. All technologies adopted by the college must follow the policies for data security and accessibility including, but not limited to:

- [00:04:00 Universal Design for Learning](#)
- [00:04:01 Accessible Informational Materials and Technologies](#)
- [08:13:00 Information Security Management System \(ISMS\)](#)
- [08:13:01 Information Technology Acceptable Use](#)
- [08:13:02 Computer Accounts](#)
- [08:13:12 Data Access Management](#)

B. Distance education courses delivered via the internet must be offered using the Pellissippi State contracted Learning Management System (LMS) or a Pellissippi State contracted conferencing technology. Courses offered through the LMS that contain publisher courseware must initiate through the LMS so that students will access the publisher material by way of system integration with the LMS or by direct links from the LMS.

C. The process for the development of new online courses is intended to ensure that

- Online courses meet College quality and accessibility standards
- Faculty have sufficient time to reflect and develop quality educational experiences
- College offices have sufficient time to correctly advise students

All new Online Courses shall have at least three months of development time prior to initial course offering. Course developers are highly encouraged to utilize College resources during development of the course.

Online courses will satisfy the same course learning objectives specified in the course master syllabus.

D. While the ideal online course allows students to complete their course work anytime from anywhere, it is recognized that some subjects and situations require instructors to utilize proctored exams or assignments. Faculty, students and external proctors are to meet the expectations specified in the Distance Education Faculty Handbook.

V. Faculty

A. Faculty teaching or planning to teach Distance Education courses shall complete specialized training as recommended by the Online Leadership Team and approved by the Chief Academic Officer. If circumstances require assigning an untrained faculty member to a Distance Education course, that faculty member must complete the specialized training within the first semester teaching a Distance Education course and, until the training has been completed, the departmental Dean or their designee must assign the untrained faculty a faculty mentor who has previously completed the specialized training.

As part of the ongoing self-assessment and faculty training expected by SACSCOC, all Distance Education faculty teaching online will undergo subsequent trainings and a periodic reflection/redevelopment process as specified by the Online Leadership Team and approved by the Chief Academic Officer.

The Office of Distance Education, in coordination with the Online Leadership Team, is responsible for the administration of the required training.

- B. Departmental deans or their designee, in consultation with the Chief Academic Officer as needed, determines teaching assignments and may limit the number of Distance Education courses taught by individual faculty.

When assigning faculty to Distance Education courses offered in summer term, departmental dean shall utilize the same standards and practices used to assign face-to-face courses offered in the summer.

- C. The College contracts with each faculty member developing distance education courses in accordance with TBR policies.

For purposes of teaching load determinations specified in Pellissippi State Policy 06:01:01, Distance Education courses shall be treated equivalent to their face-to-face counterpart course or course combination.

Distance Education courses shall not exceed the maximum capacity of the face-to-face equivalent course unless approved, on a case-by-case basis, by the Chief Academic Officer. If the Distance Education course combines two or more face-to-face course sections, the smallest maximum capacity shall be used to determine the Distance Education course capacity. Faculty shall receive compensation as agreed to by the faculty, department Dean or their designee and Chief Academic Officer for any enrollments exceeding the maximum capacity of the face-to-face equivalent course.

Compensation for faculty teaching summer Distance Education courses will be as specified in Policy 06:06:00. With the approval of the departmental Dean and Chief Academic Officer, faculty may teach an additional TN eCampus courses for a maximum of twelve (12) hours (four classes), if the additional course (three credit hours) is a TN eCampus course. The three (3) additional hours over nine for the TN eCampus course will be paid as overload hours versus the normal summer school rate.

D. Campus Time, Office Hours & Faculty Presence

Faculty teaching online Distance Education courses during their normal academic appointment may schedule their online course time, online course office hours and online course work location off campus and outside the normal hours of operation provided the faculty member can assure internet connectivity. This time shall not exceed the smaller of 30 times the equated online course load hours/15 or 30 hours. Additional off campus time may be allowed with the approval of the departmental Dean or their designee and Chief Academic Officer.

Faculty teaching online Distance Education courses during the summer session may schedule their online course time, online course office hours and online course work location off campus provided the faculty member can assure internet connectivity. Required on campus time will be limited to those activities associated with normal summer course assignments.

When faculty schedule off campus working times, they are required to provide their departmental Dean or their designee requested contact information.

VI. Ownership of Copyrightable Material

Refer to Tennessee Board of Regents Policy No. 2:05:00:00.

VII. Records

No distinction shall be made between student credit hours generated through distance learning and those generated through on-campus instruction.

Source: Tennessee Board of Regents, Policy No. 2:05:00:00

Approved: Executive Council April 29, 1991

Approved: Executive Council Sept. 14, 1992

Deans Council June 28, 1994

Executive Council July 25, 1994

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Council, July 29, 1996

Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, August 2, 1996

Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, September 9, 1997

Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, October 10, 2001

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Staff, September 25, 2006

Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, September 25, 2006

Editorial Changes, July 2008

Editorial Changes, July 2009

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Council, May 19, 2014

Approved: President L. Anthony Wise Jr., May 19, 2004

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Council, August 10, 2020

Approved: President L. Anthony Wise Jr., August 10, 2020