

Chicago State University Department of Health Studies Distance Education Policy

Purpose

The following communicates the Distance Education Policy for the Department of Health Studies. Distance education is becoming an increasing modality for student learning and Chicago State University (CSU) is preparing to gainfully employ this into our programs. We can provide quality distance education instruction for students enrolled in online or hybrid courses and ensure that faculty assigned to teach online/hybrid courses, are trained and prepared to do so. Courses will be offered to students enrolled in the Department of Health Studies, College of Health Sciences and students enrolled at CSU.

The policy below outlines the Department of Health Studies approved courses to be offered as hybrid/online courses, the maximum number of distance education courses (offered by Chicago State University and/or transferred to Chicago State University) that a student may apply towards a degree, the number of distance education courses a faculty member may teach per term, the criteria for department approval process of new online/hybrid courses and curriculum, the method for evaluating Internet courses and curriculum, the process for selecting faculty to teach Internet courses, the considerations of online instruction for the retention, promotion, and tenure award processes. The process for developing, monitoring, and reviewing enhancing and improving Internet course offerings; the process for assisting faculty members teaching Internet courses to be adequately prepared to teach and prepare required materials, the methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the distance learning offerings, the procedure that ensures adequate advisement for students registering for Internet courses, and the process for making recommendations for change and improvement to Internet courses and the supporting infrastructure are discussed below.

General Definitions

Center for Teaching and Research Excellence (CTRE) – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean the unit within Chicago State University’s Library Instruction Services that is comprised of faculty development, online learning, and academic advising.

Distance Education Committee – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean a subset our the department’s Curriculum Committee.

Distance Education Policy – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean the document that communicates the course of action and procedures adopted by the Chicago State University Department of Health Studies (i.e., hybrid and Internet) course offerings and that provides a faculty guide for developing and implementing distance education courses.

Hybrid Course – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean any course facilitated with the use of the University’s course management system (CMS) where students and instructors are required to actively engage in completing various components of the course and consists of regularly scheduled on-campus class sessions.

Online Certification Training (OCT) – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean the six-week online certification course designed to train faculty members interested in online course instruction regarding preparation of online course instructional design, preparation of content and course materials for an online environment, and understanding national best practices for online course development and facilitation.

Online Course – when used throughout this document, the term shall mean any course facilitated entirely with the use of the University’s course management system (CMS) where students and instructors are required to actively engage in completing various components of the course via asynchronous instructional methods where students and instructors are not required to be available at specific times or in specific locations and/or predetermined synchronous instructional methods.

Policy

Sections A-L below detail the Department of Health Studies' Policies

A. Approved Department of Health Studies courses to be offered via the asynchronous instructional design (Hybrid/Online):

1. HSC 3375 Health Policy
2. HSC 3329 Intro to Biostatistics *
3. HSC 4423 Intro to Environmental Health *

* Hybrid Courses

B. The maximum number of distance education courses (offered by Chicago State University and/or transferred to Chicago State University) that a student may apply towards a degree

Undergraduate students may apply no more than one-fourth of the 120 total credit hours (30 credit hours/ten 3-credit hour courses) towards a baccalaureate degree. This includes all distance education courses offered and/or transferred to Chicago State University.

Currently (Fall 2013) there are no MPH courses offered via distance learning. However when available, graduate students may apply for no more than 9 credit hours/three 3-credit hour graduate-level courses towards a Master's degree. This includes all distance education courses offered by Chicago State University and/or transferred to Chicago State University.

C. The number of distance education courses a faculty member may teach per term

Faculty members assigned to distance learning courses may teach no more than four distance education courses per term.

D. Criteria for department approval process of new online/hybrid courses and curriculum

Review of proposed distance education courses will follow the succeeding process for online/hybrid course offerings:

- The faculty member will submit a formal new course proposal to the department chairperson
- The proposal will be submitted to the department's Distance Education Committee for review
- The proposal will be submitted to the department chair and college dean for review
- Instructor of proposed online/hybrid course will successfully complete the six-week Online Certification Training (OCT) offered by the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence (CTRE)
- Course content will be reviewed for approval by the Department Distance Education Committee Chairperson
- Review of course design by the CTRE Advisory Board
- The course will be reviewed for approval by the General Education Committee (if applicable)
- The course will be reviewed for approval by the University Council on Teacher Education (if applicable)
- The course will be reviewed for approval by the Graduate Council (if applicable)
- The course will be reviewed for approval by the University Curriculum Coordinating Committee (if applicable)
- The course will be reviewed for approval by the Office of Academic Affairs
- The course will be entered in course scheduling system
- The course will be listed in appropriate publications

E. Method for evaluating Internet courses and curriculum

All distance education courses will be evaluated by the department's Distance Education Committee peer-review team. Each member of the peer-review team has been certified to teach distance education courses via successful completion of the Chicago State University CTRE's OCT and has been trained in online course evaluation.

F. Process for selecting faculty to teach Internet courses

Faculty who demonstrate an interest in teaching online/hybrid courses in their documented area of expertise will submit a formal letter of interest to the department chairperson. The faculty member will enroll in and successfully complete the six-week OCT facilitated by the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence. All courses offered via distance education shall have a qualified faculty member approved by the department Distance Education Committee chair, the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence Advisory Board, the General Education Committee (if applicable), the University Council on Teacher Education (if applicable), the Graduate Council (if applicable), the Curriculum Coordinating Committee (if applicable), and the Office of Academic Affairs. Faculty assigned to distance education courses shall retain the responsibility and authority for the academic administration and oversight of distance education courses and programs. Faculty assigned to distance education courses and programs shall have the same profile (expertise, experience, rank) as the faculty assigned to traditional on campus courses. The assigned faculty member shall have full control of the content of the course.

G. Considerations of online instruction for the retention, promotion, and tenure award processes.

Faculty members assigned to distance education courses retain the authority and the responsibility to produce and revise instructional design and course materials in order to maintain or enhance the integrity, exactness, and quality of the distance education course. The University policy on patents, intellectual property, and copyright applies to all distance education programs and courses.

Faculty assigned to distance education courses shall receive equivalent recognition of teaching and scholarly undertakings related to distance education programs corresponding with their efforts in traditional, on-campus course facilitation activities. Faculty will be compensated for any effort in serving distance education students, such as web maintenance (i.e., developing ADA appropriate instructional materials suitable for online instruction and the continued monitoring, updating, and course facilitation required throughout the duration of the course), as appropriate for the particular practices set by the department and the college and in agreement with published university intellectual property policy.

H. Process for developing, monitoring, and reviewing Internet course offerings and process for enhancing and improving Internet course offerings

Initial online/hybrid course development will be submitted by the faculty member interested in facilitating an online/hybrid course. Faculty who demonstrate an interest in teaching online/hybrid courses will submit a formal letter of interest to the department chairperson. The faculty member will enroll in and successfully complete the six-week OCT facilitated by the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence. All courses offered via distance education shall have a qualified faculty member approved by the department Distance Education Committee chair, the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence Advisory Board, the General Education Committee (if applicable), the University Council on Teacher Education (if applicable), the Graduate Council (if applicable), the Curriculum Coordinating Committee (if applicable), and the Office of Academic Affairs.

All hybrid/online courses will submit to the institutional practices for course evaluation. Based on results of course evaluations recommendations will be made by the department Distance Education Committee with respect to enhancing and improving Internet course offerings.

I. Process for assisting faculty members teaching Internet courses to be adequately prepared to teach and prepare required materials

Chicago State University's CTRE is expected to provide improvement opportunities for faculty designed to increase their knowledge of distance education methodologies, online instructional design, the use of innovative technology to facilitate online instruction, student assessment and evaluation in online instruction, understanding of national best practices in online instruction, and improving their instructional skills.

Chicago State University's CTRE is expected to provide timely assistance and support to faculty members facilitating online courses (i.e., response within 48 hours excluding weekends and holidays). Faculty

require appropriate services and resources to support their effectiveness and efficiency as distance educators and to assure an effective and efficient teaching and learning environment for distance education students. Faculty assigned to distance education courses necessitate ongoing guidance, training, application and evaluative support from Chicago State University's CTRE staff to assure the effective and efficient use of the online/hybrid course. Chicago State University's Information Technology Division (ITD), or appropriate information technology unit, is expected to provide adequate equipment (including equipment maintenance), software, and communications access to faculty to support communication with students, collaborating institutions, and other faculty for approved platforms and initiatives.

J. Methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the distance learning offerings

Distance learning courses must be equivalent to in-class course:

- Syllabi must conform to the College of Health Science (CHS) requirements
 - Grade assignment must conform to CHS requirements
 - Assessment measures must be specified and linked to course program and student learning outcomes

The university online course evaluation process shall serve to evaluate the effectiveness of distance learning courses taught in the Department of Health Studies. As needed, modification by course instructor will be encouraged.

K. Procedure that ensures adequate advisement for students registering for Internet courses

Departmental academic advisors will counsel students on the specifics of distance education prior to authorizing enrollment in an online/hybrid course and provide students with policies of application of distance education courses toward the degree. Each faculty member assigned to a distance education course will provide students enrolled in the course with a link to complete the SmartMeasure Online Readiness Assessment (<http://csu.readi.info/>) within the first week of the semester. SmartMeasure assists students in determining the degree to which distance learning will be a good fit for various learning styles, technological knowledge acquisition, computer literacy, and/or competing personal responsibilities. Students will not be penalized for results of the initial assessment. Student should be provided with resources to assist them with identified deficiencies should they determine to continue enrollment in the course.

L. Process for making recommendations for change and improvement to Internet courses and the supporting infrastructure

The Chicago State University Department of Health Studies, Distance Education Committee will review all institutional course evaluation results for online/hybrid courses and make recommendations for improvement of identified deficiencies. Course instructional design and material updates will be planned and methodically implemented by the faculty member assigned to the distance education course under review with support from the department Distance Education Committee and the Chicago State University's CTRE. The Chicago State University Distance Education Committee and the Center for Teaching and Research Excellence staff shall be available to provide design consultation, to aid the faculty member in the enhancement of instructional design, to coordinate the production of course materials, and to provide support during course implementation and evaluation.