

**Revised May 13, 2012**

## **Adelphi University Distance Learning Policy**

Distance learning has assumed increasing prominence in higher education. Done well, it expands access to education for those who otherwise could not join a traditional classroom setting because of geographic distance. It also provides flexibility for both students and faculty in terms of course scheduling. Equally important, it exposes students to information literacy and technology skills that are essential for today's technology driven world. It also stimulates opportunities for faculty development and professional growth.

While Adelphi University will never abandon the small and intimate face-to-face classroom environment that has been its educational signature for more than one hundred years, it must at the same time judiciously develop high quality instructional opportunities to meet the needs of the diverse student population it serves.

Whether distance learning is incorporated in a traditional class setting, or delivered in place of it, well designed instruction must be at the core of course and program offerings. Not all disciplines, or all types of instruction, will employ technology-enhanced curricula in the same manner. Nonetheless, some common guidelines are important to assure the highest educational quality for such distributed learning. The elements of this policy are established to guarantee that Adelphi University continues to provide excellent educational experiences for both students and faculty.

The current policy was drafted by the FCPE Advisory Board with input from the Senate Committee on Academic and Information Technology, the Ruth S. Ammon School of Education Technology Committee and the Office of the Provost.

### **Definition of Distance Learning**

Adelphi University recognizes distance learning as a formal educational process that, for a substantial portion of the instructional time, employs available technology to bridge the distances between faculty and students, and between students, who are separated by space and time.

### **Definition for Individual Courses at Adelphi**

Adelphi currently recognizes two formats for distance learning courses, as defined by the Sloan Consortium:

- Blended instruction where 30% to 79% of the instruction is conducted online via Adelphi University's course management system (currently Moodle). The remainder of the instruction is provided in a traditional face-to-face modality. Although the online component is typically asynchronous, it may be synchronous.

- Online instruction with few or no traditional on-site, face-to-face meetings, and the course hosted on the web via Moodle with 80% or more of the instruction conducted online.

### **Definition for Programs at Adelphi**

Adelphi adheres to the New York State and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education that define any program that offers more than 50% of its instruction online as a distance education program.

### **Guiding Principles for Distance Learning at Adelphi**

Adelphi University has a commitment to providing instruction and programs that meet the diverse learning needs of our students. Expanded instructional opportunities capture new markets by introducing new certificate, degree and continuing education programs. Distance Learning presents rich opportunities by providing students in selected programs more flexibility in scheduling and enhances existing courses by blending traditional classroom and asynchronous approaches in courses, allowing students to work more independently. All of these activities will enhance our students' skills in using new technology and learning with technology.

The following principles underlie Adelphi's current policy on Distance Learning.

- The faculty is ultimately responsible for the integrity of distance learning content and delivery.
- Faculty are not required to teach in a distance learning format.
- Curriculum developed for distance learning needs to fit the format. To present course or program offerings in a distributed manner, there has to be a defensible rationale.
- There is an administrative commitment to distance instruction, including extensive technical support for users. Students enrolled in distance learning courses/programs receive the appropriate student and academic services.
- Regular training for our students in web-based utilities is essential for the University to be successful in employing instructional technologies.
- Extensive faculty training in distance learning through the Faculty Center for Professional Excellence (FCPE) is available.
- Distance learning requires online availability of journals and library databases.
- Information literacy tutorials can be found online at <http://libraries.adelphi.edu/research/tutorials/tilt/>

- Optimum class size depends upon the activities in the course.
- All distance learning courses and programs will be assessed for effectiveness in terms of student experience and the degree to which learning goals have been met.

## **1. ACADEMIC GUIDELINES**

### **1.1 Calendar and Course Credits**

1.1.1 Courses will be offered according to the general AU academic calendar. Courses are offered on a semester calendar; however, if appropriate, shorter cycles are permitted with the permission of the Provost's Office. Continuing education offerings are not subject to the University's academic calendar.

1.1.2 Final examinations will be scheduled according to the designated examination period for the semester or cycle, unless otherwise approved by the Provost's Office.

### **1.2 Course Integrity**

1.2.1 All standard Adelphi policies apply to faculty and students in distance learning classes, as in traditional face to face (F2F) courses. Any policies that are required to be listed on standard Adelphi syllabi should likewise be listed on distance learning syllabi, including, but not limited to:

- Academic integrity
- Code of Ethics
- Student Code of Conduct
- Policy on Discrimination and Harassment
- Disability Compliance Statement

1.2.2 Courses will reflect good practices relating to:

- The inclusion of well articulated learning goals, course expectations and requirements, methods of communication with instructor, and important institutional policies on the course syllabus
- Course procedures (e.g. communication, assignment submission)
- Format and accessibility of material
- Use of media to accommodate different learning styles.
- Student assessment
- Program and course assessment
- Establishment of an online community
- Provision of instructions for students in the event of interruption of service
- Informing students that the posting of abusive or insulting messages is prohibited

See <http://fcpe.adelphi.edu/> for guidelines on the use of discussion boards and

synchronous chats; course evaluation instruments; and syllabus construction.

1.2.3 Distance education courses will include opportunity for extensive interactions between faculty and students and among students.

1.2.4. References to personal traits such as race, ethnicity, disabilities, age, and gender may be made public only when a student initiates the action to do so.

1.2.5 The program faculty member has responsibility for the quality of all program curricula. As such, it is the faculty that is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the distance learning offerings.

### **1.3 Curriculum Approval Process**

1.3.1 New Courses: New courses must be approved by the unit curriculum committee and Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs.

1.3.2 New Programs: New programs must be approved by the unit curriculum committee, Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, Provost, President, Board of Trustees, and New York State Education Department.

1.3.3 Existing Courses: Online presentation of a course is deemed an alternative presentation mode and subject to the approval of the department/chair and dean if it employs the syllabus of the approved face-to-face course. Substantive changes in content should be approved by the unit curriculum committee.

1.3.4. Faculty members must identify their course sections as either “Online” (O) or “Blended” (B) on the course planning form. This is IMPORTANT because this will affect how the course section is identified on course registration forms (e.g. Section Name, Course and Section Number, Semester, section format indication -- “Online” or “Blended”), and will inform students of the presentation modality before they enroll. This will also enable a link in C.L.A.S.S. to the online student tutorial, “Is Online Learning Right for You.” <http://academics.adelphi.edu/online/students/rightforyou.php>

### **1.4 Course Platform and Presentation Requirements**

1.4.1 Course Platform: All online courses and curricula must use the Adelphi University supported course management system (currently *Moodle*).

Course Presentation: All online courses and curricula presented as part of University sponsored distance learning will reflect best practices in terms of course organization and design. Examples are available for consideration at <http://fcpe.adelphi.edu/DL/about/sample.php>.

Access to online course environments will be restricted to the instructor and registered

students. Should the instructor wish to invite a guest from outside the Adelphi community to participate he/she should contact the IT department to arrange for temporary access.

Final grades are submitted via the C.L.A.S.S. system.

The University will provide reasonable accommodations for disabled students and comply with *Web Accessibility Initiative Standards* (<http://www.w3.org/WAI/>). As with students enrolled in traditional courses, students with disabilities may register with the Office of Disability Support Services (<http://students.adelphi.edu/sa/dss/>). That Office will assist in providing accommodations when appropriate.

## **1.5 Compliance with New York State and Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards**

1.5.1 Distance instruction at Adelphi must meet the guidelines set by the New York State Education Department and the interregional accrediting agencies, including the Middle States Commission on Higher Education <http://www.msche.org/publications/Guidelines-for-the-Evaluation-of-Distance-Education-Programs.pdf>

1.5.2 Two organizations that set standards and best practices for online teaching and learning include the SLOAN Consortium <http://sloanconsortium.org/> and the Quality Matters <http://www.qmprogram.org/>. The FCPE will guide faculty to these resources as appropriate.

## **1.6 Student Performance Assessment**

In specific cases student work may be utilized to serve a larger assessment such as for program or student learning assessment or accreditation purposes. Such assessments will vary by school and instructors should confer with department chairs and program directors about whether his/her course is subject to such assessment.

## **2. FACULTY**

### **2.1 Faculty Obligations**

2.1.1 Faculty obligations are consistent with those identified in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Trustees of Adelphi University and the AAUP.

2.1.2 Faculty performance will be evaluated in accordance with the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Trustees of Adelphi University and the AAUP.

2.1.3 The University's standard Course Evaluation Form will be provided via a link online within Moodle courses. Additional questions specific to the course modality may be added to the online course evaluation form.

2.1.4 A faculty member teaching a distance learning course shall conduct the normally expected number of office hours. These office hours can be conducted online. When conducting on-line office hours, faculty members are not required to be present on campus.

2.1.5 Faculty are not compelled to teach in any distance learning format.

## 2.2 Faculty Preparation

2.2.1 The appropriate academic administrator (e.g., chair, director, dean) is responsible for ensuring that the course developer and/or instructor has the necessary skills to develop and/or teach online curriculum.

2.2.2 Faculty who teach in distance learning modalities must acquire competency in the use of the appropriate technologies. Training is offered by the University through the FCPE.

Upon the start of the course, the instructor should possess the following qualifications:

### 2.2.2.a Technology

- Ability to post materials in Moodle: embedded as attachments and in form of links;
- Ability to create and manage a discussion forum in Moodle;
- Ability to create and administer surveys, quizzes and/or tests in Moodle;
- Ability to publish students grades via the Moodle grade book;
- Ability to guide students through the online course environment;
- Knowledge and ability to install necessary “plug-ins” for the course;
- knowledge of commonly accessible file formats and how to save them;
- Ability to resize graphics so they can be easily viewed in Moodle;
- Knowledge of how to make an e-reserve available via the library’s web pages;
- Awareness of options for how to provide material in a manner accessible to students with disabilities.

### 2.2.2.b Online Course Design and Faculty Responsibilities

- Faculty should have an understanding of the different strategies needed for teaching online vs. teaching face-to-face.
- Faculty should have knowledge of strategies to engage the online learner and create effective online learning activities.
- Faculty should be familiar with the rights and limitations of the TEACH Act and Fair Use in higher education. Guidelines from TEACH ACT are available here: <http://www.copyright.com/media/pdfs/CR-Teach-Act.pdf>
- Faculty are responsible for following copyright requirements in the development or revision of distance learning materials.

- Faculty are responsible for certifying that all work presented is a product of their efforts and that no plagiarism or unauthorized use exists.

## 2.3 Faculty Compensation and Course Ownership

In all cases, any exceptions to the policies below will be agreed upon in writing prior to the start of the course.

### 2.3.1 Faculty Workload

- a. Unless otherwise agreed to by the University and the faculty member and specified in writing, the assignment of the course will be covered under faculty workload or overload and subject to the same compensation as stated in the collective bargaining agreement.
- b. Unless otherwise agreed to by the University and the faculty member and specified in writing, the development of the distance learning curricula will be considered as part of the faculty obligation, as is the case with traditional face-to-face course development.
- c. Maximum student enrollment will be determined by the content and level of student-faculty interaction in the course. However, as with all courses at the University, maximum student enrollment will be recommended by the department/program chair/director or Dean and agreed upon by the Provost.

### 2.3.2 Course Ownership

- a. A Course/curriculum that is developed by a faculty member as part of normal workload or overload is owned by the faculty member. Permission for the University to use the course must be secured in writing from the faculty developer.
- b. Ownership of a course/curriculum developed by a faculty member as part of normal workload or overload, but compensated by additional stipend, is subject to written agreement between the University and the course developer.
- c. Ownership of a course/curriculum developed under a “Work for Hire” contract is subject to written agreement between the University and the course developer.

### 2.3.3 Development of Non-Credit, Continuing Education Courses

The development of non-credit, continuing education courses will be accomplished exclusively by means of a “Work for Hire” agreement. The fees for development of such courses will be agreed upon by the University and the course developer and specified in writing.

## **3. STUDENT COURSE ADMINISTRATION**

### 3.1 Student Enrollment Procedures

3.1.1 Students will be automatically entered into the online course at the start of the semester, with late “adds” loaded daily thereafter.

3.1.2 Grade book activity for students who have withdrawn from a course will not be deleted.

3.1.3 For students who have withdrawn from a course, for which there are no grade book activities, the instructors will remove the student from the course.

3.1.4 Students will no longer have access to the Moodle course beginning 14 days after the last day of classes for the semester.

### 3.2 Student Transcripts

3.2.1 Transcripts will be handled as with traditional face-to-face courses.

3.2.2 Transcripts will not reflect the modality of courses.

### 3.3 Student Admission Standards

3.3.1 Pre-requisites and admission standards for the course or program will be decided by department/program faculty, and clearly stated in the course schedule and CLASS system.

### 3.4 Student Training

3.4.1 Adelphi University shall provide adequate support services for the students participating in distance learning courses, including necessary equipment, personnel and training.

3.4.2 Student tutorials are available for online use in preparation for taking a course that employs distance learning technology.

## **4. University Resources**

### 4.1 Faculty Training and Support

Adelphi University shall provide adequate support for the faculty teaching distance learning courses. The University provides significant support through the course design and instructional technology support professionals at the FCPE. These services are freely available to all faculty. Training opportunities are offered in both group workshop and individual sessions on topics and applications of instructional technology and related pedagogy.



The FCPE specializes in faculty support, instructional applications and pedagogical issues involving technology. Faculty can contact the FCPE for assistance with developing an online or blended course. The Center is open Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-7:00 PM and Friday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM, and by appointment. Faculty may also walk in to the Support Lab in Alumnae Hall, Room 01 anytime the Center is open. Phone assistance is available at (516) 877-4228 or (516) 877-4220. The Center's email address is [fcpe@adelphi.edu](mailto:fcpe@adelphi.edu). The Center's Distance Learning Support Site can be found at <http://fcpe.adelphi.edu/DL/> and contains a wide range of resources for teaching online and blended courses in addition to workshop and seminar training schedules.

4.1.4 When requested, the FCPE will facilitate peer liaison with other Adelphi faculty for discussions of subject-specific, teaching, or technology aspects of course development.

#### 4.2 Technology Support

Adelphi University shall provide the necessary equipment, training and personnel for technology support. Adelphi University employs the Office of Information Technology (IT) to support the University with administrative systems, equipment maintenance and general user support for Moodle and other applications. Students requiring assistance with Moodle should contact the IT Help Desk. Live support is available for faculty, students and staff at the IT Help Desk on the second floor of the Swirbul Library, via telephone (516) 877-3340 or email [helpdesk@adelphi.edu](mailto:helpdesk@adelphi.edu). Please see current hours of operation at <http://infotech.adelphi.edu/contact/>

For urgent questions and technical problems during off hours, faculty should contact the IT Help Desk as above.

4.2.3 In the event that servers are down, email or phone messages will be sent to the entire Adelphi community.

#### 4.3 Library Support

The Adelphi University Libraries play an integral role in the instructional, research, cultural, and student life programs of the University by providing high quality library and information facilities, resources, technology, and services in consonance with the mission and vision of the University. The Libraries serve all members of the Adelphi community representing diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as a wide range of academic disciplines.

Access is offered to a comprehensive variety of resources and collections that support Adelphi's curriculum and information needs. The Libraries support and promote information literacy by teaching members of the Adelphi community to find and evaluate information effectively and to incorporate it ethically in pursuit of their academic, professional, and personal endeavors.

The Adelphi University Libraries specifically support distance instruction by providing:

- \*Remote access to databases and electronic journals.
- \*Electronic reserve for course related materials.
- \*Web-based tutorials for basic information literacy for research.

\*Telephone reference assistance (and limited online reference assistance via Adobe Connect).

\*Interlibrary loan of articles for delivery via e-mail.

\*Interlibrary loan of books for pickup at Garden City or Center libraries.

For information concerning:

- e-reserves, call Access Services at 516-877-3570
- information literacy/library instruction, call 516-877-3584
- reference assistance, call Reference at 516-877-3574
- interlibrary loan, call Interlibrary Loan at 516-877-3571

For more information about Adelphi University's Distance Learning Policy, please contact the director of the Faculty Center for Professional Excellence at (516) 877-4221.