Chapter 14
DISTANCE EDUCATION

Implementation of Distance Education Article 42
Approved by APSCUF Representative Council December 14, 2000
Approved by APSCUF Representative Council February 22, 2001

While Article 42 of the CBA concerns distance education, the procedure in this policy pertains to section E of the article -- Course Approval. Article 42 defines distance education as…"mediated communication/instruction between faculty member(s) and student(s) other than when faculty member(s) and student(s) are physically present in the same classroom." In accordance with the definition, this policy applies to all courses where more than one-third of the contact hours are conducted via distance education technologies and the students are located at remote sites with little or no required presence in a traditional classroom setting on an IUP campus. If distance education technologies are used for less than one-third of classroom hours, this policy and compensation process are not applicable. Furthermore, when more than one-third of the courses required in a graduate degree or certificate program are designated "distance education" courses, as defined above, a program revision proposal must be approved through the graduate peer review process.

The CBA specifically states that "distance education shall not include instruction at multiple locations on the same campus" (Article 42 A-1). Courses offered via technology to students at branch campuses and other off-site locations are considered distance education courses. In addition, several courses by design have for quite some time required students to pursue their studies outside of the classroom and are specifically addressed in the CBA. Therefore, the following are exceptions to the above policy and are not considered distance education courses:

clinical experience	internship	cooperative education
practicum	student teaching	independent study
individualized instruction	thesis and dissertation	

Curriculum Approval for Existing and Special Topics Courses
This procedure pertains to the method of delivery and the quality of instruction. Note that although special topics courses are treated in the same manner as existing courses, curriculum committee policy, which prohibits the scheduling of a special topics course more than three times, will be enforced.

A course proposal, which includes sample module(s), will be made available for review and recommendation to the departmental curriculum committee. Given that thirty calendar days are allowed for the review process, the department recommendation and course syllabus (for special topics courses only) are forwarded simultaneously to the University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum committee or Graduate Committee for review and recommendation, and to the President or designee. Information copies are also sent to the college curriculum committee, college dean, Dean of the School of Continuing Education, and if applicable, the Dean of Graduate School and Research. After considering the recommendations, the President or designee shall announce a decision prior to the deadline.

The department shall conduct a review, using the form provided by the university-wide curriculum committee (see Appendix) as a guide. The following criteria listed under Article 42 Section E. appear on the form:

a) a qualified instructor;

b) use of suitable technology as a substitute for the traditional classroom;
c) suitable opportunity for interaction between instructor and student;
d) suitable evaluation of student achievement by the instructor; and integrity of the evaluation methods used.

The President or designee is to receive the proposal and any recommendations from the department curriculum committee and from the University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Committee no later than twenty-four calendar days after the University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Committee receives the department proposal with recommendation. The President or designee will announce final disposition of the proposal within thirty days after the University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Committee receives the department proposal with recommendation. In order for a recommendation to be considered by the President or designee, it must be received by the twenty-four calendar-day deadline, excluding breaks, during the fall and spring semesters. If the President or designee has not received information from one of the two committees, he/she may grant temporary approval to offer the course one time.

Curriculum Approval for New Courses

New credit bearing courses, which may be offered through distance education, must be approved through the normal course approval procedure of the University, which shall incorporate the criteria in CBA Article 42 E.

Note: 1. Existing courses offered via distance education technologies prior to April 30, 2001 may continue as approved distance education courses without additional review.
2. For the purpose of the Article 42 preparation payment, a Special Topics course that is later approved through the curricular process is considered the same course if not significantly changed since first time it was offered.

Approval to Schedule Distance Education Courses

Curriculum approval of a new or existing course for distance education delivery does not assure that the course will be listed on the schedule. Prior to taking the first step in adapting an existing course or developing a new course that uses distance education technologies, the faculty member shall consult with his/her department chair and dean to ascertain whether or not projected enrollment and technical infrastructure are sufficient to support the endeavor.

Because of such additional costs as the preparation compensation, off-site student fee, and technical assistance for the faculty member and students, every distance education course must receive budget approval from the dean of the college or the Dean of the School of Continuing Education, as appropriate, prior to review by the department curriculum committee. Moreover, approval for the distance education course must be obtained from the dean of the college or the Dean of the School of Continuing Education, as appropriate, prior to the start of classes each semester the course is offered.

Compensation

Preparation compensation is paid in accordance with Article 42. Faculty members who share in the development of a course will share in the stipend as determined by the faculty members.

Approved Meet & Discuss February 22, 2001