The [University's Policy for Distance Education](#) articulates key standards the University must meet to ensure quality and integrity of distance education offerings, as well as to comply with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) standards and federal regulations.

Degree and certificate programs that meet the definition of a "distance-delivered program" must design and implement those programs in alignment with the standards articulated in all University policies focused on distance education. While some of these standards are embedded in existing University processes (such as academic program review, ongoing assessment reporting, etc.), many will require additional work on the part of academic units offering distance education programs. The following definitions apply:

Distance-delivered Programs
Degree and certificate programs in which 75% or more of the required courses may be taken as distance-delivered courses.

Distance-delivered Courses
Courses in which 75% or more of the instruction and interaction occurs with the instructor and the students physically separated from one another. This includes *asynchronous online courses*, *synchronous online courses*, and *dual-mode courses* (i.e., those in which distance students attend in-person classes via a web conferencing tool, such as Zoom).

Academic units offering distance education degree and certificate programs must consult with the Distance Education Office to ensure they understand what is expected of them and to develop a timeline for ensuring all standards are met.

1	Program Purpose and Context
	The program must be appropriate to the University's mission and purposes.
	The program must align with any stated institutional goals for the student experience.
	The program must be appropriate for the University's and the academic unit's strategic plans.

2	Marketing, Recruitment, and Admissions Practices
	Recruitment and admissions practices for the program must appropriately target the student populations to be served.
	Recruitment and admissions practices must provide effective web-based information to students about the nature of the distance education environment, and must assist prospective students in understanding whether they possess the skills important to success in a distance education program.
	Publications and advertising for the program must be accurate and contain necessary information such as program goals, requirements including any face-to-face/in-person expectations, academic calendar, and on-ground work (e.g., internships, specialized

	laboratory work), special software purchase requirements, or any additional fees associated with the program being offered at a distance.
	If there are program-specific procedures to ensure that a student who registers for the program/courses is the same student who participates in and completes the program/courses, those procedures – and any costs to the student associated with those procedures – must be made clear to the student in writing, at the time of program admission and/or course registration. *(Note: This is a federal requirement. All institutions that offer distance education programming must demonstrate compliance with this requirement.)*
	Students must be provided with reasonable and cost-effective ways to participate in the authentication process to any program-specific technology systems.

3 | Program Design, Integrity, and Oversight

	The faculty must have a primary role in the program's design and implementation.
	The program's rigor must be consistent with any in-person version of the program, as well as with other programs offered by the University.
	The program's curriculum must be coherent in its content and sequencing of courses.
	The program's curriculum and courses must be consistent with the on-ground/in-person version of the program (if applicable).
	The quality of instruction in the program must be consistent with that of any in-person version of the program, as well as with other programs offered by the University.
	The program must be approved through standard faculty governance and curriculum approval processes for the school/college and the University.
	The program must be periodically evaluated for sustainability and alignment with institutional priorities consistent with other academic program review processes.
	Courses offered in the program must be scheduled in a way that provides students with a dependable pathway to ensure timely completion of their degree/certificate.

4 | Course and Instructional Quality

	Instructors teaching in the program must be prepared appropriately to teach in the distance education environment, consistent with University policies.
	Instructors teaching in the program must have access to regular professional development programming, including best practices in distance education pedagogy, applicable technologies, and institutional mission.
	Distance courses (including dual-mode courses) offered in the program must be designed in compliance with University standards/policies (e.g., the University's Distance Course Design Rubric) to ensure quality distance learning and compliance with external requirements. *Note: this includes the requirement that all SLU distance courses be facilitated through the University's learning management system, currently Canvas.*
	In programs designed around the dual-mode course format, all dual-mode courses offered in the program should meet the expectations articulated in Section 2 of the Criteria Matrix for Approving Synchronous Online and Dual-Mode Courses. In general, the design of the program also should align with the descriptions of appropriate context for dual-mode courses articulated in Section 1 of the Criteria Matrix.
	The program should comply with University Guidelines on appropriate instructor-student ratios in distance courses.

	The curriculum and course design/delivery must support student-student and faculty-student interaction.
	Assessment of student learning in the program should reflect effective practices for distance education.
	In programs designed around the dual-mode course format, student learning and other outcomes must be assessed regularly to ensure parity for distance students and in-person students.
	Student course evaluations must be routinely administered.
	The program must routinely analyze – and make course and program improvements based on – student course evaluation data, and must document these changes.

5 | Student Success and Support

	Students must be provided with an orientation that specifically prepares them for distance learning at SLU (in addition to any other information specific to the program), as well as be provided with an orientation to the University, our mission, the school/college, academic support resources, policies and procedures, and the like.
	Students must be provided with information about academic integrity policies and expectations during the orientation for distance students.
	Program-specific policies on academic integrity must be relevant and appropriate for distance education.
	Students must be provided effective access to any program-specific learning resources (such as library or other resources).
	Any program- or academic unit-specific student complaint processes, codes of conduct, and appeal processes must be clearly defined, accessible, and designed such that distance students are able to engage in the processes effectively from a distance.
	Any program-specific academic or other student support services should be provided in formats appropriate to the delivery of distance education.
	School/college/program services should be equitably available to online/distance students (e.g., internship coordination, clinical/practicum/capstone supervision, etc.).
	Any program-specific academic or other student support services should be regularly evaluated for their effectiveness and the evaluation results used for improvement of services.
	Courses, program-specific services, and program-specific resources must employ strategies to comply with ADA accessibility regulations per the University Distance Education policies.

6 | Consortial/External Partners (if applicable)

If the program is offered through contractual relationships or arrangement with consortial partners, the program also must ensure that . . .

	The contractual relationships or arrangements with consortial partners are clear and guarantee that the University can exercise full responsibility for the academic quality of the program and its courses.
	Any faculty/instructors identified/recruited by the external entity meet all University requirements for faculty qualifications, including preparation in online pedagogy.

	Any courses designed/built by the external entity meet all University requirements for course design and quality, *including being offered within the University's learning management system, currently Canvas.*
	Any support provided by those partners for faculty members are effective and available throughout the duration of the course/program.
	Any support provided by those partners for students are effective and available throughout the duration of the course/program.