Distance Education

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Definitions – Distance Education

Fully Distance Education Course: A course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling **no more than 15 percent** of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test.

Hybrid/Blended Course: A course in which a majority (more than **50 percent but less than 85 percent**), of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place.

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Coordinating Board Rules Chapter 4 Subchapter P §4.257 (9)(A,B)

Definitions – Off-Campus

Off-Campus Course: A course in which a majority (**more than 50 percent**) of the instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are in the same physical location and which meets one of the following criteria:

- ✓ for public senior colleges and universities, Lamar state colleges, or public technical colleges, off-campus locations are locations **away from the main campus**;
- ✓ for public community colleges, off-campus locations are sites **outside the service area**.

Off-Campus Degree or Certificate Program: A program in which a student may complete a majority (**more than 50 percent**) of the credit hours required for the program through **off-campus courses**.

Coordinating Board Rules Chapter 4 Subchapter Q §4.272 (18-19)

Approval Process for Distance Education and Off-Campus Programs

- ✓ **Approval by Board of Trustees**
- ✓ **Approval by Affected Higher Education Regional Council(s)**
  - ✓Regional Council approval is required for those programs delivered face-to-face or electronic-to-group **out of service area**.
- ✓ **Coordinating Board Notification**
  - ✓Coordinating Board notification is required for those programs delivered **electronically to individuals**, i.e. online.

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Approval Process for Distance Education and Off-Campus Courses

- **Approval by Affected Higher Education Regional Council(s)**
  - Regional Council approval is required for those courses delivered face-to-face or electronic-to-group **out of service area**.
- **Exceptions**
  - No approval is required for:
    - courses in programs approved for delivery to specific locations (e.g., a Multi Institutional Teaching Center, University Center, or other approved site).
    - dual credit courses (must be reported to the affected Higher Education Regional Council)
    - lower-division clinical courses.

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Higher Education Regional Councils (HERCs)

- ✓ **Authorized under Texas Education Code 51.662**
- ✓ **Membership**
  - ✓Each of the ten HERCs consist of universities, community colleges, technical colleges, and Lamar State Colleges within the region.
- ✓ **Purpose**
  - ✓The purpose of the HERCs is to **advise the Commissioner** on appropriate policies and procedures for the effective state-level administration of off-campus lower-division instruction. The HERCs are also expected to **help facilitate inter-institutional cooperation** in the conduct of off-campus instruction and to **encourage excellence** in the conduct of off-campus lower-division instruction.

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Responsibilities of the HERCs

- ✓ **Review** the proposed off-campus lower-division course and program offerings of each member public institution as presented in their **Off-Campus Instructional Plans.**
- ✓ **Assure** that each institution in the region receives **notification** of all **off-campus lower-division courses and programs** to be offered in the Region by any other public institution, and to provide each public institution in the Region full **opportunity to review and comment** on the plans of other public institutions, excluding dual credit courses.
- ✓ **Resolve** any disputes associated with the proposed off-campus lower-division course offerings, excluding dual credit.
- ✓ **Study** cooperatively the various **methods of providing lower-division off-campus instruction**, and promote the use of those methods which support quality and promise the most effective and efficient use of state resources.

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Distance Education Dual Credit Courses

- ✓**Statutory Reference**
  - ✓Texas Education Code 130.008 and 28.009
- ✓**Online (Electronic to Individuals) Dual Credit**
  - ✓Institutions are **not required to receive Regional Council or Coordinating Board approval** for the offering of online dual credit.
- ✓**Off-Campus (Face-to-Face or Electronic to Groups) Dual Credit**
  - ✓A community college may offer dual credit outside of its service area if **invited** to do so by the school district.
  - ✓The community college must notify the affected HERC.

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Distance Education Clinical Courses

- ✓**Coordinating Board Rules**
  - ✓Chapter 4 Subchapter Q 4.278 (i)
- ✓**Distance Education Clinical Courses are Exempt from HERC approval if each of the criteria is met:**
  - ✓The student(s) enrolled in the course is already **employed** by the clinical facility.
  - ✓The clinical facility provides the institution with written verification that there will be **no reduction** in the number of **clinical opportunities** for use by area institutions.
  - ✓The institution **notifies the affected Regional Council(s)** of the clinical course and provides the written verification from the facility.

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For more information on Distance Education, please visit:

http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/distanceed

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