

## UB -VII-3.7, Policy on Definitions of Course and Program Modalities

Approved by UFS, May 2020

Approved by Executive Team, Feb. 2021

Revision approved May 2022

Section 12. Revised and Approved by UFS April 2025

The University of Baltimore offers courses, sections of courses, and programs in various modalities. To ensure that faculty and administrators across campus are using the same nomenclature, the following definitions have been offered by the faculty Online Advisory Board, a subcommittee of the University Faculty Senate Academic Support Committee. From time to time, definitions may be added or revised through shared governance to reflect ongoing changes in regulations, reporting requirements, and common practice.

Note: Some definitions are provided by regulations and State or Federal requirements:

- The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) is the official compilation of all administrative regulations issued by agencies of the state of Maryland. More information can be found here: <https://lib.guides.umd.edu/mdlawresources/COMAR>.
- MHEC Distance Education Survey - The survey was designed to capture the extent and the character of the distance education activities of all Maryland colleges and universities. More information can be found here: [https://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions\\_training/Pages/distsurv.aspx](https://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Pages/distsurv.aspx)
- Certain regulations governing students with F-1 or J-1 visas pertain to distance education (see information on SEVIS).
- IPEDS and NC-SARA, which is the consortium that enables UB to offer distance education across the US, have reporting requirements that rely on definitions provided here.
- Specialized accrediting bodies, such as the American Bar Association, can also impact definitions.

### 1. COMAR 13B.02.03.02.B.17 definition of on-campus education that must be used by UB:

**On-campus education** means education in which the instruction occurs when the learner or learners and the instructor or instructors are in the same location, synchronously to all students. On-campus education may incorporate elements of technology, and may be web-enhanced, e.g., instruction with standard meeting places and times, which include an electronic component to deliver homework assignments or require e-mail exchanges between the instructor and students.

### 2. COMAR 13B.02.03.02.B.6 definition of distance education that must be used by UB:

**Distance education** means education that uses one or more of the following technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor, and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously:

- (a) Internet;
- (b) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcasts, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite or wireless communication devices;
- (c) Audio conferencing; and
- (d) Video cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassette, DVDs, and CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with a technology listed in §B(6)(a)—(c) of this regulation.”

**3. Distance education survey definition of on-campus students that must be implemented by UB:**

**On-campus students** are those students enrolled in **traditional classroom-based courses only** for the specified semester. These courses should have 50% or more of their instruction/interaction in a traditional classroom or face-to-face setting, with specified meeting times and a standard location. These students **should not** have enrolled in any distance education courses during the specified semester unless that course was cancelled. Include correspondence students in this distance education category.

**4. MHEC Distance education survey definition of distance education students that must be implemented by UB:**

**Distance education students** are those students enrolled in **courses delivered via distance education only** during the time period specified. These courses should include any and all distributed delivery methods where at least 50% of the instruction/interaction is technology mediated/electronically delivered. These students **should not** have enrolled in any face-to-face courses during the specified semester unless that course was cancelled.

**5. MHEC Distance education survey definition of students in traditional and mixed modalities that must be implemented by UB:**

**Students who have Traditional and Distance Mixed modalities** are those students enrolled in at least one traditional face-to-face and at least one distance education course during the specified semester, with 50% or more of their instruction/interaction in a traditional classroom or face-to-face setting, with specified meeting times and a standard location.

**6. COMAR 13B.02.03.02.B.18 definition of an on-campus program that must be used by UB:**

An **on-campus program** is one that is not a distance education program.

**7. Offering distance ed and on-campus modalities for a program - State and Federal regulation that has to be UB policy:**

- a. Even if a student may take courses through distance education for an on-campus program, as long as a program is considered on-campus and not distance education ONLY, then students must be able to complete an on-campus program through on-campus education only.
- b. It may be that one modality or another offers more electives; this is acceptable so long as it is publicized accurately to students what they are able to take on campus and what through distance education.
- c. It is of particular importance to students with visas that we be clear about which courses are available through on-campus education. Visa-holding students have limits on how much online education they may enroll in both from US regulations and from home country scholarship and other requirements, which may vary from country to country.
- d. **Student-visa-holding international students may not be admitted to distance-education-only programs.**
- e. If a degree program can be completed on-campus except for less than a third of the credits, then certain visa-holders may be able to enroll in the degree depending on the requirements of their home country and any of its funding. However, programs admitting international students thus have to know at any given time how many and which of their credits are available on campus and which through distance education and make that clear to students and advisors so that international students can have a degree plan and follow it. (A two-year schedule with modalities indicated would

be needed).

**8. COMAR 13B.02.03.02.B.8 definition of a distance education program that must be used by UB:**

A ‘**distance education program**’ means a program for which all required coursework for program completion may be completed by distance education courses. All such programs have to have MHEC approval to operate in this modality even if they were previously approved as on-campus programs.

9. The University of Baltimore has **two types of distance education programs**:
- a) **Distance-education-only** (e.g., Online MBA); and
  - b) **Distance-education-possible** (e.g., Flexible MBA) – the whole program could be done online but doesn’t have to be
  - c) Distance-education-only programs may request of the Regents special pricing; however, student charges alter if all credits attempted are not online.

**10. Distance Education Course; Online Course**

- a. **COMAR13B.02.03.02.B.7 requires UB to use:** A “‘distance education course’ -- which UB defines as an “**online course**”-- is a course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education, except that requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as a distance education course.”
- b. **The MHEC definition of a distance education course for purposes of the Distance Education Survey is** “Courses where at least 50% of the instruction/interaction is conducted via distance learning technologies (i.e., technology is the *primary* mode of instruction/interaction). This does not include "web-enhanced" courses (those with standard meeting places/times which include an electronic component to deliver homework assignments or require e-mail exchanges between the instructor and students), or traditional correspondence courses.”
- c. **Academic divisions of the University may require, however, that an online course or online program be precluded from having any on-campus requirements.**
  - i. The Merrick School of Business, for example, does not allow course sections coded as distance education courses (“WEB”) to have on-campus testing.

11. **An on-campus course** means a course in which instruction is provided primarily face-to-face in a scheduled class meeting, with the learner or learners and the instructor or instructors in the same location. Presence on campus is integral to completion of the course: **at least two-thirds of the contact hours required for the credits awarded for that course must be conducted on campus (examinations on campus may count toward that percentage)**. Supplementary course content and/or other activities<sup>1</sup>, may be conducted using UB’s Learning Management System (LMS) or alternate applications.<sup>2</sup>

12. A **hybrid course** is one in which approximately 40%-50% of course instruction is provided on-campus with all meeting times provided at registration. The course syllabus must indicate all course meeting dates.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other activities include orientation meetings, discussion forums, online exams, email, assignments submitted electronically, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Alternative applications, include other platforms, such as Pearson, McGraw-Hill etc.

All courses that are coded in PeopleSoft as hybrid are considered in person for Homeland Security and State and Federal reporting purposes.<sup>3</sup>

**13. Interactive Video Network Courses (IVN) courses**

- a. UB participates in an interactive video network for sharing synchronous courses between University System of Maryland (USM) institutions and other remote locations. Students in a UB classroom connect to a faculty member, often at another campus. An interactive video network course will be designated (e.g., IVN) in published campus materials.<sup>4</sup>
- b. Under COMAR 13B.02.03.02.B.6 (see above), IVN is classed as a type of distance education. State reporting makes all IVN courses online as well. *Thus, visa-holding international students cannot be enrolled in programs that rely on IVN – that is, unless we can develop some kind of dual supervision model that would meet SEVP/Homeland Security guidelines.*<sup>5</sup> This policy may be amended later to include such a supervisory model.

**14. An online asynchronous course is one in which all course instruction is conducted online. Face- to-face meetings or on-campus activities<sup>6</sup> are not required, and there are no scheduled meeting times.**

- a. Students are required to have a computer and Internet access with appropriate software. They may be required to use other available technologies, including UB's Learning Management System (LMS) or alternative applications.
- b. Technical requirements must be documented and publicized in advance of the course. Per federal regulations, technical requirements should be made known to students by the time of registration, especially if students have to purchase any equipment or services, including any special requirements for online proctoring.
- c. Academic divisions of the University may require that sections identified as online must be asynchronous.
- d. If a web tuition is charged for a WEB (asynchronous) course or if the course is otherwise noted at registration as being asynchronous, the course must be conducted asynchronously.

**15. An online synchronous course is one in which all course instruction is conducted online. Face- to-face meetings or on-campus activities are not required. During scheduled course meeting times, faculty and students participate and interact simultaneously online via technology (including but potentially not limited to using the Internet, microphones, webcams, and other software for connectivity).**

- a. Students are required to have a computer and broadband Internet access with appropriate software. They may be required to use other available technologies, including UB's Learning Management System (LMS) or alternative applications.

---

<sup>3</sup> Hybrid courses use UB's Learning Management System (LMS) or other learning technologies for classroom meetings for lecture, active learning, lab experiences, demonstrations, presentations, performances, etc. Regular access to UB's LMS will be required.

<sup>4</sup> Note: IVN courses are offered at Shady Grove.

<sup>5</sup> SEVP – Student Exchange Visitor Program (More information can be found: <https://www.ice.gov/sevis>)

<sup>6</sup> Other activities include orientation meetings, discussion forums, online exams, email, assignments submitted electronically, live guest presentations etc.

- b. Per federal regulations, technical requirements should be made known to students by the time of registration, especially if students have to purchase any equipment or services, including any special requirements for online proctoring.
16. A **flexible hybrid course** is one that offers traditional classroom and synchronous online sessions for course instruction. Supplementary course content and/or other activities may be conducted online, using UB's Learning Management System (LMS) or alternate Web-based applications.
- a. Programs may allow flexible hybrid instruction. That is on a case-by-case basis as the program has to be approved for online delivery through shared governance and MHEC.<sup>7</sup>
  - b. As flexible hybrid courses are to allow online and in-person (on campus) students, there must be separate sections, one for on-campus (classroom) instruction and one for online instruction. This type of delivery will be referred to as "Bee-Flex" to distinguish the particular way in which faculty deliver instruction to undergraduates and graduate students at The University of Baltimore.
    - i. A flexible hybrid course that is coded as on-campus must have a section that is marked in the PeopleSoft schedule as on-campus.
    - ii. Attendance for on-campus students must be documented to protect students who receive benefits related to being in on-campus courses (e.g., visa, veterans' benefits).
    - iii. The on-campus section has to have the instructor present in the classroom.
    - iv. The on-campus section must physically meet the contact hours requirements of an on-campus course for the number of credits awarded. Supplemental activities or even testing may be conducted online so long as the contact hour rule is followed.

---

<sup>7</sup> Any time that a course requires any fees or costs for identity verification, the costs and process have to be documented, shared with the dean and provost, and publicized to students ahead of the student's registration in the class or we have violated a Middle States requirement of affiliation (this is part of the compliance report we file).