DISTANCE EDUCATION HANDBOOK

Guidelines and procedures with regard to Missouri State distance delivery.

Missouri State Outreach

This handbook can be found online at:
https://www.missouristate.edu/Provost/DistanceEducation/policies_procedures.htm

Contents

Distance Education Handbook

This handbook contains the guidelines and procedures that guide the academic community at Missouri State University in the maintenance of quality standards and best practices in online and distance teaching and learning. This handbook should be considered a supplemental resource to existing university policies found in the Missouri State Policy Library at https://www.missouristate.edu/policy/.

Missouri State University is committed to increasing the alternative pathways for degree completion. Missouri State distance delivered courses are held to the same high standards for student outcomes as traditionally delivered courses.

Distance Education Committee (DEC)

The Distance Education Committee is charged with reviewing, creating, and recommending direction and policy for the Provost's consideration for all alternative forms of teaching, which include such modalities as IVID, online, blended, and online video courses. The committee assists the Provost in coordinating and communicating these policies to the university community.

The Distance Education Committee consists of Missouri State faculty members appointed to the committee by College Deans and representatives appointed by the Provost from the Office of the Provost, Information Services, Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL), Missouri State Online, and Missouri State Outreach. The representatives appointed by the Provost are considered standing committee members.

Faculty Representatives appointed to the Distance Education Committee serve for a three-year term. Faculty committee members may serve two successive three-year terms, but then they will be ineligible for reappointment for a minimum of three years. The service terms of Faculty Representatives are staggered. The committee has faculty representation from each of the colleges and a faculty member from the West Plains Campus. More information can be found at https://www.missouristate.edu/provost/DistanceEducation.

Alternative Pathways Definitions

- **Online**: programs which offer students the opportunity to obtain a degree completely online in an asynchronous format, offering a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs. Visit Missouri State Online for more information: https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online

- **Web Conferencing (also known as CNCT): synchronous** courses in which students and instructors meet via the cloud through web conferencing technology such as Zoom. The instructor may either be in a classroom space, or on a personal device. Participants are primarily joining remotely from personal devices. This type of course involves either only one classroom or no classroom space.

- **Blended**: courses that integrate online and traditional face-to-face class activities in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner; seated component will constitute 40%-60% of course instructional time. This must be specified in the course description.

- **Off-Campus** (also known as IVID): programs that utilize BearNet, a two-way audio/video connection offering live communication between students and teachers at multiple locations. Visit the Off-Campus Programs website for more information: https://outreach.missouristate.edu/OffCampus/ocfacultysupport.htm

- **Online Video Courses** (previously iCourses): courses that allow students to watch video-recorded course lectures to study whenever they want, wherever they want. Courses are professionally

produced Online Video Courses website for more information:
https://outreach.missouristate.edu/onlinevideo

Learn more about course modalities on the website of the Provost:
https://www.missouristate.edu/Provost/FacultyAffairs/FacultyResources/modalities.htm.

Academic Programs: Online Degrees and Certificates

Missouri State University currently offers more than 90 graduate and undergraduate degrees, minors, and certificates online. Online credit hours offered at Missouri State continue to expand to meet the needs of our students. Distance education is a contributing factor in the University's plan for future growth. Emphasis is placed upon developing faculty skills in the pedagogy of online teaching and learning. A current list of online programs and certificates can be found at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online.

State Authorization and Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

MSU membership in SARA provides a reciprocal process for offering distance education opportunities for students outside Missouri and across the United States. Colleges or universities in a SARA state only need their home state authorization to offer distance education to any other SARA member state.

Currently, there are 49 SARA member states. SARA covers online degree programs and clinical experiences associated with online degrees. SARA institutions agree to follow best practices for postsecondary distance education as adopted by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C- RAC). Missouri State Online provides a web page designating states where MSU is authorized to offer courses for students at a distance. This website is consistently updated to reflect current SARA membership. Non-Missouri students should report complaints through the SARA portal only after exhausting university procedures.
https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/Articulation-Agreements.htm

Developing Distance Courses

Distance-delivered courses are considered and initiated by individual departments and are taught by core faculty. Different types of distance courses are designed to serve different needs. For instance, off-campus courses help connect cohorts of students at satellite campuses, while Online Video Courses can replicate large lecture courses at a distance. Instructors who would like to explore different distance education delivery types should contact Missouri State Outreach for more information.

When a department determines that a program will be delivered fully online, provost funding is available for course development. More information regarding this process can be found at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/OnlineFacultySupport/default.htm. Funding support for off-campus programs and individual Online Video Courses is also available. Contact Timothy Tucker via email at TTucker@MissouriState.edu for more information about off-campus program support. For more information regarding Online Video Course development, please contact Dr. Brandon Decker via email at JBDecker@MissouriState.edu.

Faculty Development Resources

Faculty have many options to further their knowledge of distance education delivery modalities. Support is available through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, Computer Services, and individual departments. IVID instructors have additional resources and one-on-one training available through the IVID support staff in Missouri State Outreach; they can be reached at 417-836-6421.

Course Development

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) assists faculty with course development through week-long boot camps and individualized self-paced schedules. The course development program is designed to assist faculty throughout the development process with the use of effective pedagogy and instructional design. The instructional designers conduct a final review of completed courses using the Online Learning Consortium Quality Scorecard (OLC-QS). Learn more at https://www.missouristate.edu/fctl.

Blackboard Training Videos

Computer Services offers an extensive line of training videos for Blackboard, the university's current Learning Management System (LMS). The Blackboard training videos introduce faculty to common elements of the LMS and continue through advanced applications. The 90+ videos are available in playlists on the Help Desk's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/msuhelpdesk/playlists

Classroom-to-Classroom and Web Conferencing

Distance instructors have access to classroom operation manuals and additional resources on the off-campus faculty support services page at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/offcampus/ocfacultysupport.htm. IVID support staff are available for additional assistance and one-on-one training for instructors; they can be reached at 417-836-6421.

Certified Distance Educator Award

The Certified Distance Educator award was established in 2015 to encourage continued professional development in distance education, provide recognition of continued growth in distance education, and foster instructional innovation. More information about the award can be found at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/cdeaward.htm.

Assessment in Distance Education

All faculty are required to specify any proctored events clearly in the syllabus. Any proctored event that may require additional fees must be stated in the course listing at the time of student registration.

It is not appropriate to require students from outside the region to travel to Missouri State campus locations for course exams.

Respondus LockDown Browser

The university makes the Respondus LockDown browser available for use in any course without charge to the student. This tool works with the Blackboard LMS to prevent students from printing or copying exam materials, navigating to other URLs, or accessing other applications during an exam. Respondus LockDown is available for both Windows and Mac systems, making it a viable tool for academic integrity assurance. This product can be used in conjunction with live proctoring at the Testing Center or other locations.

Training for this tool is available through the Computer Services department. More information is available at https://web.respondus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RLDB-QSG-Bb-Instructor.pdf

Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor

Respondus LockDown Browser has an optional Monitor component that can record students taking an exam by using their personal computer's webcam and microphone. This software is available without charge to the student. The recording of the student is available for instructors to review, and the program automatically flags

potential integrity concerns (e.g., students leaving the computer, additional individuals entering, and students looking away). Instructors that use this tool for proctored testing should give students the opportunity to practice with mock tests prior to actual exams.

This product cannot be used in conjunction with live proctoring at Meyer Library Testing Center. It duplicates the live proctoring process, and the setup requires a microphone and webcam check which are disruptive to other students. Instructors can set up their exams to offer students a choice between a live proctored environment and the Respondus LockDown Monitor recording tool. Contact the Testing Center (TestingCenter@MissouriState.edu) for more information regarding setup.

Online Test Proctoring Products

Some instructors or programs may wish to utilize third party distance proctoring tools beyond Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor. Missouri State University follows federal requirements regarding these systems: any additional fees to the student must be stated clearly in the course listing so that all costs associated with the course can be calculated at the time of registration. Please note, these third-party products cannot be accommodated at the Meyer Library Testing Center.

Meyer Library Testing Center

The Testing Center inside Meyer Library is available to use for proctoring exams. Faculty must complete a form to schedule their proctored exam(s) at the start of the semester. Students are required to make an appointment for all exams. Learn more at https://www.missouristate.edu/TestingCenter. The Missouri State Testing Center is a member of the National College Testing Association.

Missouri State Off-Campus Test Proctoring

Students located near a Missouri State satellite campus may be allowed to access those facilities for proctored exams at no cost. Updated information regarding available campuses and contacts can be found at https://www.missouristate.edu/TestingCenter/off-campus-proctoring.htm.

Out of Region Test Proctoring

Students outside the Missouri State region can also make arrangements for proctored exams, subject to approval of the proctor and location by the instructor. This process should be started early in the semester so that all paperwork can be completed prior to the first proctored exam. Learn more at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/proctorexamsforstudents.htm.

If instructors require assistance with this process, they can contact the Meyer Library Testing Center for additional help.

Course Evaluations

The DEC developed a survey instrument used across all online courses to gauge student perception of their learning experience. Missouri State Online, in conjunction with MSU's Colleges, utilizes the Watermark Course Evaluations & Surveys platform with Blackboard integration to deliver course evaluations to students securely and efficiently. The data is collected and distributed to faculty, department heads, and deans and used as part of the faculty evaluation process.

Evaluations for online courses will typically begin the day after the last day to withdraw from the course and will continue until finals begin.

With the addition of survey notification functionality in Blackboard (via a pop-up box reminder), student

responses for online evaluations notably increased. While this is a significant improvement, it is essential that we continue to encourage students to complete course evaluations and stress the importance of the online course surveys university wide. To this end, departments and faculty are encouraged to remind students to complete the surveys, emphasize that evaluation responses are anonymous, and stress the importance of the survey results as an evaluation tool. Additional information for increasing student responses may be found at http://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/studentevaluations.htm.

Faculty Support Services

Missouri State provides and supports a growing network of faculty support mechanisms designed to ensure the availability of the latest innovative instructional technology and pedagogy to faculty who are using alternative pathway modalities for teaching students.

Computer Services Help Desk

The Help Desk provides support approx. 12 hours a day Monday through Friday. Faculty may call, email, chat, or be assisted through remote support. For more information on available services, visit the Help Desk website at http://helpdesk.missouristate.edu. The Computer Services department also offers faculty support services for Blackboard through training sessions, online guides, video tutorials and open-access labs.

Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

The FCTL provides direct support to faculty as well as many workshops and events throughout the year. More information can be found on the FCTL website: http://www.missouristate.edu/fctl

Accessibility Resources

Faculty teaching in any modality should be aware of the accessibility needs of their students. The FCTL website offers the Accessibility Resources Page for Faculty at https://www.missouristate.edu/fctl/337470.htm.

Missouri State Online

Missouri State Online provides a hub for faculty resources that is continuously updated. Information can be found at http://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/onlinefacultysupport.htm.

Off-Campus Training and Support

Off-campus faculty have additional resources tailored to their specific classroom technology. IVID support personnel are available to troubleshoot problems and to provide one-on-one training. Additional information is available at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/offcampus/ocfacultysupport.htm.

Zoom Support

Zoom Videoconferencing accounts are available by request to support distance delivered courses and programs. This videoconference tool can bridge to connect IVID infrastructure at satellite campuses and can also be used independently to conduct remote live courses. Zoom accounts can be requested online at https://outreach.missouristate.edu/zoom-faculty-resources.htm.

Online Video Course Support

Online Video Courses are supported by a team of media experts as well as a coordinator at Missouri State Online. Contact Dr. Brandon Decker (JBDecker@MissouriState.edu) to learn more about recording options. https://outreach.missouristate.edu/onlinevideo

Master Online Course Recognition Award (MOCRA)

Missouri State Online recognizes our exceptional online instructors with annual awards in five categories and a Best Overall award. For more information about the awards and the nomination process visit http://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/MOCRA.htm.

MSU's Copyright and Fair Use Policies

Copying Copyrighted Materials (Policy Library):
https://www.missouristate.edu/policy/Op12_05_1_CopyingCopyrightedMaterials.htm

Use of Copyrighted Materials for Educational and Research Purposes:
https://www.missouristate.edu/policy/G3_04_3_CopyrightPolicy.htm

Intellectual Property Statement:
https://www.missouristate.edu/assets/policy/G3_04_2_Creation_of_intellectual_property_2011.pdf

Faculty Handbook and Resources, Office of the Provost

Find the faculty handbook and resources at the Provost Office:
http://www.missouristate.edu/provost/facultyresources.htm

Student Support Services

Working closely with faculty and student support units across campus, Missouri State Online strives to provide students with the same high-quality education and level of support all Missouri State students have come to expect. Everything students need to enroll and complete a program of study is available online.

Missouri State Online

The Missouri State online website serves as a hub for our student support services:
https://outreach.missouristate.edu/online/onlinestudentsupport.htm

Complaint procedures for are also available: https://www.missouristate.edu/StudentGrievance/default.htm

Students must fully exhaust university procedures prior to filing complaints through the Missouri Department of Higher Education or SARA portals.

Help Desk

The Help Desk provides support approx. 12 hours a day Monday through Friday. Faculty may call, email, chat, or be assisted through remote support. For more information on available services, visit the Help Desk website at https://helpdesk.missouristate.edu.

Online Student Orientation

Missouri State provides an online student orientation for every student enrolled in an online course. The orientation provides information regarding best practices in online learning, use of the Blackboard LMS, and university resources for online students, including financial aid, the bookstore, library resources, and Career Center. Students are automatically enrolled in this Blackboard community, providing resources that are consistently available. An online student readiness self-assessment is also available in the orientation course students.

Disability Services

Students requiring disability accommodations must request these officially from Missouri State. The request form is found at https://www.missouristate.edu/disability/accommodation-request-form.htm.

Examples of accommodations that may be available to students include, but are not limited to, closed captioning for video, additional time for exams, and different options for online exam formats.

The full accommodation policy can be found here: http://www.missouristate.edu/disability/accommodation.htm

Students are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at DRC@MissouriState.edu if they have additional questions.

Library Resources

Missouri State libraries provide article and database access online as well as the ability to reserve print materials and have them delivered to further support distance learners. https://library.missouristate.edu/index.htm

In addition, the libraries offer additional support to distance students through virtual research consultations. These meetings help students plan research projects and suggest potential available resources. More information can be found at https://libraries.missouristate.edu/Research-Consultation-Form.htm.

Assistance in finding Open Educational Resources (OER) is also available through the library. Contact Tracy Stout for more information: TracyStout@MissouriState.edu.

Bear CLAW: Center for Learning and Writing

The Bear CLAW provides tutoring at no charge to Missouri State students. Writing consultation is available for distance education students by email at https://writingcenter.missouristate.edu/writing-consultations.htm.

Career Center

The Missouri State Career Center provides assistance with resumes, interviews, and recruiting. Distance education students can access the Missouri State job database, JobTracks, as well as participate in web- based mock interviews. Learn more at: https://careercenter.missouristate.edu

The Career Center also offers a web-based computerized career and educational planning system called Focus 2. It is an online, self-guided career planning tool that enables users to complete self-assessments and explore occupations and majors. This tool is free to Missouri State students and alumni. To create an account, you will need your Missouri State email address and access code. A password must be requested from the Career Center. More information is available at https://careercenter.missouristate.edu/students/career-assessments.htm.

Academic Integrity Policies

Missouri State takes academic integrity seriously and all students are held to the same high standard of ethics. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication or other misconduct in research, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Members of the student body are provided resources by the Missouri State University community to make them aware of ethical standards and empower them to make informed choices concerning the Missouri State University Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures. Adherence to these policies is expected from all members of the Missouri State University academic community. Students can find the Missouri State integrity policies and access more information at https://www.missouristate.edu/academicintegrity.

MSU Bookstore

The Missouri State University bookstore makes it easy to get student textbooks. Students can look up textbook information before they enroll in a course (http://missouristate.verbacompare.com), get their personalized textbook list for the coming semester (https://shop.missouristatebookstore.com/courselistbuilder.aspx), and reserve their books for pickup or have them shipped (http://www.missouristatebookstore.com/Textbooks.htm).