

# **BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE**

## **DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS**

Policy Number: IV:07:00

Date: May 2016

**Subject: Distance Education Policy**

It is recognized that the offering of distance education courses and programs has the potential to significantly affect the institution's student population, curriculum, and modes as well as venue of instruction. While the technologies involved in distance education are constantly changing, for the purpose of this document, it is sufficient to recognize that their use takes three broad forms: 100% online (asynchronous or synchronous), combined online (asynchronous and synchronous), and hybrid/hybrid plus (delivered online and in a classroom) as defined in DOPS Policy IV:07:03 on Instructional Modalities. The current recommendations are designed to apply to all forms of distance education.

### **I. Rights and Responsibilities of the University and Faculty**

#### **A. Course Approval and Enrollment**

1. All courses offered through distance education formats must meet the academic quality standards set by SUNY Buffalo State. No fundamental distinction exists between the review and approval processes for traditional and distance education courses.
2. All courses offered through distance education will be determined in the same manner as on-campus courses.
3. Course enrollments for distance education classes will be determined and approved in the same manner as enrollments in on-campus classes.

B. Academic and professional employees will be provided with opportunities to learn the technology necessary to conduct any distance education courses they are asked to teach.

C. Course-related materials containing personally identifiable student information for distance education classes should be as confidential as the medium allows consistent with appropriate student access and SUNY and state policy.

D. It is understood that faculty members will continue to create traditionally expected course-related materials, such as syllabi, assignments, and tests, for students in their program or department regardless of the method of dissemination, and use of such materials in classroom/instruction will be without the expectation of royalty payments (refer to the section dealing with intellectual property right).

E. Courses and course materials will meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

F. If a specific technology is needed for a course, faculty must inform students of hardware and software requirements in addition to prerequisite level of computer expertise.

G. Faculty should provide adequate, individualized, and timely interaction with students.

H. Faculty who teach online will provide synchronous office hours online.

I. The college will provide students with online access to appropriate library resources, administrative processes, technological assistance, and student support services.

## **II. Rights and Responsibilities of Students**

- A. Students enrolled in distance education courses are required to have access to the Internet.
- B. Students can expect to be informed of hardware requirements, software requirements, and the prerequisite level of computer expertise necessary for their courses.
- C. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations must identify themselves to the Disability Services Office.
- D. Students can expect to receive adequate, individualized, and timely interaction with faculty members and, where appropriate, fellow students in distance education courses.
- E. Students will have access to appropriate library resources, technological assistance, and student support services.

## **III. Specific Rights and Responsibilities Related to Intellectual Property and Copyright of Distance Education Course Materials at SUNY Buffalo State.**

### **A. Overview**

All copyrights to any works (including intellectual creations stored on printed page, videotape, CD-ROM, or any other medium) produced by academic or professional employees will be assigned using the definitions of and according to the Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York.

### **B. Clarification**

1. Except as limited below in paragraphs III B 2 and B 3, it is understood that intellectual property created by a faculty member or professional employee will remain the property of faculty member or professional employee for perpetuity or so long as the law allows.
  - (a) Any rebroadcast or redistribution of materials developed by academic or professional employees will require permission from the individuals who created the materials.
  - (b) A distance education course, like any other course, is the intellectual property of the faculty member who creates it, and the use of such property is contingent upon gaining the permission of the individual who created the course.
  - (c) Permission to revise or use recorded distance education classes and related materials can be granted only by the instructor responsible for its production.
  - (d) Where two or more individuals are involved in the planning, design, or composition of a distance education course, it is recommended that the parties involved assign ownership through contractual agreement.
2. The college is the sole owner of intellectual property when it expressly directs a faculty member or professional employee to create a specified work, or the work is created as a specific requirement of employment, such as might be included in a written job description.
3. The college and faculty member or professional employee are joint owners of intellectual property when the college has contributed support or facilities that go beyond what is traditionally provided. Such arrangements should be clarified through contractual agreement.

## **IV. Resources**

Distance education resources will be adequate to meet external accreditation standards set by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the New York State Department of Education, the State

University of New York, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. More specifically, SUNY Buffalo State will, within the available budget:

A. Provide academic and professional employees with appropriate instructional technologies for distance education classes.

B. Provide instructors with needed supplies as well as clerical, technical, instructional design, computing, multimedia, and library support services.

C. Implement a series of development activities for academic and professional employees to encourage them to examine educational possibilities in distance education and to receive training in the use of various technologies. The purpose of the activities is to improve teaching effectiveness and competence and increase employees' comfort level with the pedagogy and technology of distance education.