College of Arts and Letters
Guidelines on Distributed Learning
Last updated June 03, 2025

This statement is provided for use in conjunction with CSUSB's Distributed Learning Policy (FAM 827.3), which states (section A.2): "Distributed learning courses (hybrid and fully online) and programs shall be consistent with the educational mission and practices of the department, college, and the University."

CAL understands that CSUSB is primarily an institution for in-person teaching and learning. CAL also understands that distributed learning plays a vital role in reaching to our diverse population of students across the region and in promoting our educational values and mission. To this effect, CAL makes the following observations regarding teaching/learning modalities in the College.

1. The default mode of instruction for all BA/MA programs is in-person, unless the Chancellor's Office has approved them as online/hybrid degrees. Therefore, proposals for online/hybrid programs need to be submitted and approved through CSUSB's curricular approval process.

2. The WSCUC definition of a "distance education program" is one in which 50% or more of the program is delivered by distance education. In other words, if students can complete the program by taking 50% or more of their courses online, their degree will be considered an online degree. Therefore, if a program offers more than 50% of its courses online, then it must undergo a formal approval process to change its program designation from face-to-face to "distance education program."

3. For in-person programs, face-to-face classes should be offered with sufficient course availability and sufficient course frequency for students to fulfill their degree requirements in four years without having to take online courses, if they choose not to do so[1].

4. Online and/or hybrid courses should be offered only when they are in the best interest of students and when they are pedagogically justified. To this end, changes in modality for course delivery should follow the recommendations of the Chair and the College Dean to ensure that learning outcomes in these classes match those for the in-person sections of the same courses.

5. In order to maintain equity across departments and to remain complaint with WASC, the College has set a guideline that no more than 30% of courses for the major should be offered online.

6. To maintain academic excellence, online or hybrid courses should be taught by faculty who have received effective and sufficient training and completed at least

15 hours of online teaching training, such as Quality Matters (QM), ACUE, or Quality Teaching and Learning (QLT), in online pedagogical practices or campus-based online teaching training.

7. For hybrid courses, CAL strongly recommends that at least 50% of the class sessions be taught in-person. This minimum percentage is suggested in order to maintain consistency and equity across courses. When a hybrid course is scheduled, the class syllabus should clearly indicate the days and times for in-person and synchronous online meetings.

8. FAM 827.3 specifically states that faculty "teaching hybrid courses should stipulate as soon as possible before the course commences, the approximate number of face-to-face sessions that are to be replaced by online sessions or activities. If course management (for example, faculty assignment and scheduling) makes it impossible to inform students before they have enrolled, students shall be informed of the approximate number of face-to-face versus online sessions or activities in the syllabus. Students shall have access to this information as soon as is reasonable before beginning a course.

9. According to the Chancellor's Office Coding system a "hybrid classroom instruction with online instruction component," "CS," (formally "HC" according to FAM 827.3) hybrid in person synchronous and coded as learning mode 06, is a course "with [a] percentage of online instruction less than 80%). Whereas when a course is coded "CA," (formally "HO") it is referring to a hybrid in person asynchronous instructional mode (coded learning mode 05), we can expect that online "is the method of instruction," but students may need to come to campus on the designated days and times. See the Instructional and Learning Mode Guide for more detailed information.

10. All courses, regardless of the modality should provide ample opportunities for real-time interactions among faculty and students. See FAM 852.6, Policy on Office Hours for more detail.

11. According to FAM 827.3 "[c]lass size and faculty workload will be determined by the college dean after consultation with the faculty member and the department chair/school director, and must take into account the level of interaction between faculty and students."

12. According to Article 20.2b of the CBA for Unit 3 Employees, "[t]he instructional assignments of individual faculty members in the classroom, laboratory, or studio will be determined by the appropriate administrator after consultation with the department chair (or designee) and/or the individual faculty member".

13. Tenure-track faculty may teach up to 6 WTUs or 50% of their teaching load each semester, online. Chairs are encouraged to schedule at least 50% of each Lecturer faculty member's courses as in-person. Any exceptions to the up to 50%

in-person instruction requirement must be approved by the Dean in consultation with the department chair.

14. To ensure consistency across the college, all instructors who teach online must use a campus-approved Learning Management System (LMS) such as Canvas.

15. Unless explicitly approved by Human Resources, Faculty Affairs, and the Dean, faculty seeking accommodations shall not assume they can teach fully online courses year after year. Medical accommodations shall be reviewed and renewed periodically, and having accommodations approved does not mean faculty members can be automatically entitled to teaching online courses synchronously or asynchronously in perpetuity.

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[1] The use of Next Generation Smart Classrooms is encouraged when deemed appropriate by the instructor. Their use is considered as a part of an in-person instruction.

[2] Currently, CAL offers no online programs.