

Recommendations for Distance Learning at Plattsburgh State University of New York (1998) and Guidelines (2006)

Note on document use: The 1998 Recommendations (1-15) and the 2006 Guidelines (A-J) are integrated in broad issue-based categories for comprehensive application.

Academic Standards

1. All courses offered through distance-learning formats must meet the academic quality standards set by Plattsburgh State University of New York. No distinction exists between the review and approval processes for traditional and distance-learning courses (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
2. Course enrollments for distance-learning classes should not exceed the established enrollments in traditional classes without departmental approval and should not increase the overall workload of any academic or professional employee. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

A. Guideline on Class Size: Fully online E-Learning class size will be set at 15 the first time (and only the first time) an instructor teaches in the E-Learning environment, regardless of the Course Management System (CMS) in use. (2006)

Faculty Involvement

3. Academic and professional employees teaching distance-learning courses will be assigned or recommended for appointment by the department. Academic and professional employees will not be required to teach distance-learning classes unless such expectations are included in the job advertisements for their positions. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

B. Guideline on Work Location Assignments: Satellite campus programs require faculty and staff. Current practice is to staff with volunteer commuters or special project commuters, voluntary relocations, and to hire employees at a satellite campus location. The UUP agreement requires one primary work location, with the allowance of an assignment at a secondary location under very specific guidelines. Secondary work locations have not been campus practice. State policy with regard to travel reimbursements will apply. (2006)

4. Academic and professional employees will participate in policy decisions regarding distance- learning. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

C. Guideline on Future planning/transitions of CMS software: E-Learning planning and CMS transitions will be handled with the policy planning participation of academic and professional faculty, represented by the Teaching, Learning & Technology Advisory Group (TLTAG) and the Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC). (2006)

5. Academic and professional employees and staff will be evaluated through Performance Reviews of Academic Employees and Performance Reviews of Professional Employees. All employees will be equally recognized in reappointment, promotion, tenure, and discretionary increases for teaching, regardless of the format or medium in which it is conducted. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

University and Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

6. Any rebroadcast or redistribution of materials developed by academic and professional employees will require permission of the individual who produced the materials. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
7. Computer files, data, discs, electronic mail, and local-area-network communication for distance-learning classes should be as confidential as the medium allows. Viewing of broadcast tapes, computer files, discs, data, electronic mail, and local-area-network communication outside the class setting and instructor-developed student evaluations (does not apply to institution-wide evaluations) will require the consent of the distance-learning instructor who was responsible for its production. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

D. Guideline on E-Learning and faculty and student privacy:

Every effort will be made to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of faculty and student materials, notwithstanding legal educational review required for management of the university, and following all state law and SUNY policy. Current practice in course information materials requests (from student to faculty, from department chair to faculty, from Dean to department chair to faculty) would continue in the E-Learning environment All requests for information requiring E-Learning or CMS administrative access will be channeled through the Dean of LIS for review and authorization. The Dean of LIS will maintain a record of such requests for annual review by a follow-up E-Learning Joint Labor/Management Committee. E-Learning privacy policies do not prohibit the university from reporting non-individually identifiable aggregate data to be used for university reporting, program assessment, or E-Learning management. (2006)

8. All appropriate parts of the Policies of the Board of Trustees and the Public Officers Laws shall apply to the development and delivery of distance learning courses, as they would to courses developed and delivered using traditional methodology. All rights to copyright and published written works (including all intellectual creations stored on the printed page, on videotape, on CD-ROM or in any other medium) produced by academic and professional employees will be assigned using the definitions set forth in the Board of Trustees policies, Article XI, Title J, including the University Software Policy, reissued in January 16, 1998, or any subsequent edition of the policies in force. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

F. Guideline on Intellectual Property Rights (including shared materials and teaching libraries): Materials voluntarily deposited into a Plattsburgh repository of shared resources and teaching libraries will remain the intellectual property of their author(s). Other members of the Plattsburgh State Community would be granted permission to reuse and revise, but not to further redistribute the materials providing that a full citation to the original is included with the statement "revised and used with permission or "used with permission". (2006)

Resources

9. Within available campus resources, academic and professional employees will be provided with the instructional technologies they need for distance-learning classes and will have access to appropriate technology for communicating with students and for preparing and delivering courses. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
10. Within available campus resources, academic and professional employees will be provided with needed supplies and clerical, technical, graphical, computing, multimedia, and library support services. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
11. Plattsburgh State University will implement a series of development activities for academic and professional employees to encourage them to examine educational possibilities in distance learning 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 learning. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
12. A remote-site technical assistant should be provided for each interactive instructional session. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)
13. Within available campus resources, students will have access to a group of services, including library resources, technology assistance, and student support services. If a specific technology is prerequisite for a course, students must be informed of this requirement when they register for the course. (1998, re-affirmed 2006)

Organizational Structures

14. A Distance Learning Strategic Planning Committee, including academic and professional employees, will be established and will be responsible for the following tasks:
 - A. Exploring and evaluating technological options for distance learning
 - B. Exploring options for professional development in distance learning through Plattsburgh State University funds, as well as external funds and grants
 - C. Exploring the impact of distance learning programs from other institutions on course offerings at Plattsburgh State University
 - D. Exploring Plattsburgh's possible participation in other organizations, particularly the SUNY Learning Network
 - E. Conducting a needs assessment of students
 - F. Overseeing the full range of policies related to distance learning
 - G. Recommending policies, operations, and processes for assisting and supporting academic and professional initiatives in distance learning, e.g. compensation and workload release.

G. The tasks intended to be carried out by that committee have or will be assigned to other standing committees (TLTAG, ITEC) or specific personnel (All Academic Deans, Dean of LIS, Associate Dean of LIS, Coordinator of Instructional Technology), therefore this section of the agreement will be disregarded in current practice. (2006)

15. The Joint Labor Management Subcommittee will continue to meet twice a year to review, amend and add policies as needed. Membership on this committee will be rotated on three-year staggered terms with review and reappointment by the campus and chapter presidents, maintaining an equitable labor/management representation.

H. The College should rather establish such a standing subcommittee to meet only once a year, perhaps in early April of each year to carry out the review as intended. (2006)

Appendix A:

New Recommendations of the Joint Labor/Management Committee on Distance Learning 2006, addressing questions arising after the 1998 agreement.

I. Guideline on Measuring “seat time” for E-Learning courses: There is no trustworthy equivalent to on-campus seat-time in the E-Learning environment, and therefore no new joint labor/management guideline or measure of seat-time will be developed. (2006)

J. Guideline on Faculty E-Learning Assignment Limits: There is no need for E-Learning assignment limits in light of current course approval and faculty performance review processes, and as long as the design and teaching of E-Learning courses ensures active faculty engagement in the course for the scheduled duration of the course. (2006)