Accreditation and Compliance
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Governance and Guidance

- United States Department of Education (DOE)
- Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity (NC-SARA)
- Quality Matters (QM), Online Learning Consortium (OLC), University System of Maryland (USM)
Distance Learning--Courses (DOE)

Distance education means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) of this definition to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction [RSI] between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include -

1) The internet;
2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
3) Audio conferencing; or
4) Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this definition.

34 CFR § 600.2 - Definitions.
Distance Learning--Programs (MHEC)

- TITLE 13B
  MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION SUBTITLE 02 ACADEMIC REGULATIONS
  Chapter 03 Academic Programs – Degree-Granting Institutions

- 13B.02.03.02
- .02 Definitions.
- B. Terms Defined.
- (7) “Distance education program” means:
  (a) For an institution of higher education other than a community college, a program in which more than 50 percent of the program is offered through electronic distribution of instruction to one or more sites other than the principal location of an institution….
Requirements

- Distance Education is not Correspondence Courses. Correspondence courses do not qualify for federal financial aid.
- Online courses qualify for financial aid if they meet the RSI requirement.
- Instructors must be certified to teach online courses at UMES.
- Hybrid courses do not fall under the Distance Education guidelines—currently.
DISTANCE EDUCATION

REGULAR INTERACTION

- Institutions must ensure regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors
  
  - Prior to the student’s completion of a course or competency, provide the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and regular basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount and the amount of content in the course or competency
  
  - Monitor the student’s academic engagement and success and ensure that an instructor is responsible for proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed, or upon request by the student
DISTANCE EDUCATION

SUBSTANTIVE INTERACTION
- Substantive interaction would be defined under distance education as engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and including two of the following:

1. Providing direct instruction
2. Assessing or providing feedback on a student’s coursework
3. Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency
4. Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency, or
5. Other instructional activities approved by the institution’s or program’s accrediting agency
If you are teaching an online course in the fall semester 2021 or later, you need to be certified.

The UMES Online Teaching Certification Course is fully underway and expected to certify its next group of instructors by the end of March. (We currently have ~80 instructors in the course, and we are admitting new participants in order of teaching priority. The sooner you are scheduled to teach online, the closer you are to the top of the list.)

At this time, UMES recognizes three routes to Online Teaching Certification:

- Complete the UMES Online Teaching Certification Course (OTCC) or have completed a previous version. [Contact CITOL for details and verification.]
- Have completed a comparable certification through another institution. [Contact CITOL for details and verification.]
- Complete an alternative or supplemental course recognized by UMES. UMES recognizes QM, OLC, Future Learn (with supplementation) courses at this time. [Contact CITOL for details and verification.]
Forthcoming

- Summer updates and webinars.
- Hybrid certification short course.
- Course review and certification.
- LMS update course.