

# **THE UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

1. The faculty of the University has the responsibility to play a significant and meaningful role in determining the appropriate implementation of distance learning.
2. It is agreed that the provisions of this appendix constitute an agreement separate and distinct from all other agreements entered into by FPC and FAC and that the terms and conditions stipulated herein shall not provide precedent, nor be used to interpret, any other agreement between FAC and FPC; similarly, the interpretation of this agreement shall be based solely on the provisions set forth herein, except that when alleging a violation or misapplication of this agreement a faculty member shall have full recourse to the grievance procedure set forth in this Handbook.

## **B. DEFINITION**

Advances in technology allow for the development of innovative methods of instruction. The terms "*Distance Education*" and "*Distance Learning*" as used herein refer to instruction where the teacher and the student are usually separated geographically; communication is accomplished instead by one or more technological media: live or recorded visual presentations, materials using direct signal or cable, transmission by telephone line, fiber-optic line, digital and/or analog videotape, print, audio-tape, CD-ROM, computer or Internet technology, e-mail or other electronic means now known or hereafter developed, utilized to teach a course originating from or sponsored by the University. "*Course*" refers to any credit-bearing class offered through the University.

## **C. QUALITY CONTROL OF THE CURRICULUM**

### **1. Distance Learning Courses**

Distance learning courses shall comply with the University's procedures, standard practices, and criteria, which have been established for traditional classroom courses and in accordance with the Faculty Handbook. A distance learning course which constitutes a new course offering must be presented to the full-time members of the academic department in which it is offered for recommendation of approval. Such departmental review of a distance learning course shall occur even when the proposed course is a section of an already existing and approved course.

### **2. Evaluation of the Distance Learning Class and Faculty Member**

- a. Students enrolled in distance learning courses shall have the opportunity to evaluate the course and the instructor just as in any other course that is offered at the University.

- b. Faculty members teaching distance learning courses shall be evaluated in the same manner as all other faculty members in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Faculty Handbook or University procedures. Observation for the purposes of evaluation will be determined in accordance with departmental practice.

## **D. WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **1. Teaching Assignments**

- a. The assignment of a University faculty member to teach a distance learning course is voluntary, not mandatory, but otherwise subject to the usual procedures for course assignment in accordance with Section 7.0 of the Faculty Handbook. Faculty who have accepted a stipend for the development of a distance learning course are expected to teach that course as needed but not to exceed three times in five years. The faculty member may voluntarily offer the course more than three times in five years if it fits programmatic needs.

The precise terms and conditions of these arrangements shall be stated in a written contract signed by the faculty member and the University before the faculty member begins teaching the course. For projects beginning in summer session 2002 and for the 2002-2003 academic year, stipends for distance education development projects will be \$1,000 per credit hour. The availability of distance learning course development funding and the amount thereof will be announced during the spring semester of each year.

- b. Faculty may develop distance learning courses without accepting a stipend. These courses must comply with the same review, evaluation, approval, and scheduling process as all other distance learning courses; however, the faculty member will not be expected to teach the course any particular number of times.
- c. Normally the faculty member teaching a distance learning course for the first time will be scheduled to teach that course during summer or intersession; otherwise it will be scheduled during the faculty member's nine-credit semester.

### **2. On-Campus Faculty Positions**

- a. There will be no reduction in the number of full-time teaching positions in a department as a result of distance learning classes in that department being added to the class schedule.
- b. No pre-recorded form of instruction shall be employed by the University for the purpose of replacing faculty members, in whole or in part, regardless of the technology utilized.

### 3. Workload/Teaching Responsibility

- a. **Enrollment.** Determination of class size for a distance learning class shall be based on pedagogical considerations. Ordinarily, enrollment in a web-based course will not exceed 75% of the average enrollment of those sections of the same course taught in traditional format during the last offering of the proposed course within a Fall or Spring semester. If the proposed course is a course that has not yet been offered in traditional format at the University, then the dean shall, at his or her discretion, determine any enrollment limitations; however, the faculty member shall be informed of the dean's enrollment determination prior to making a commitment to teach such a course.
- b. **Planning first time teaching of a distance learning course.** Training and assistance will be provided by the University as the faculty member is preparing the course and during course delivery. If the faculty member deems it necessary or desirable to obtain further training not offered on campus, he or she may apply for ordinarily available funding.
- c. **Workload Issues.** Courses taught via distance learning may be included as part of the University faculty member's regular load or may constitute in whole or in part an overload. The teaching responsibilities as they relate to assignments, scheduling, syllabi, papers, tests, and grades shall be equivalent to those of the corresponding traditional course sections.
- d. **Travel.** The faculty member may be required to travel to distance learning sites off-campus. If the faculty member deems it appropriate to visit an off-campus site, or if the course agreement requires such travel, the faculty member will receive compensation and reimbursement for travel at the normal University rates as stated in the Faculty Handbook.

### 4. Availability of Assistance

- a. The University shall ensure that the necessary technology and equipment are identified and in place.
- b. Provisions shall be made for clerical, technical, library and learning resources support, as they are for other University courses, as well as designated site coordinators for video conferencing.
- c. Assistance will be provided by the University, as it is for other University courses, in developing study guides, teaching aids, and other course materials, and in clearing copyrights for use of material in the course.

## **E. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN RELATION TO DISTANCE LEARNING**

### **1. Ownership of Materials**

The ownership of materials created by the University faculty member in preparation and delivery of a distance learning course shall be determined by the Copyright Policy.

### **2. Changing and Updating Materials and Re-transmission of Courses**

- a. Courses and course presentations shall not be recorded without prior knowledge and consent of the faculty member.
- b. The faculty member (or multiple faculty creators) who creates the course (or adapts a pre-existing course) for use in distance learning shall exercise control, by written consent, over the future use, modification, and distribution of recorded instructional materials and shall determine whether the material should be revised or withdrawn from use.
- c. Following the third offering of a distance learning course and when the faculty member determines that a major revision of the course is necessary, the faculty member may apply for a stipend to revise the course. If the faculty member accepts the stipend, the faculty commitment cycle as specified in D.1.a of this agreement begins again.

## **F. ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The University and the faculty share the responsibility for ensuring that students in distance learning courses are held to the same standards of academic honesty as students in traditional courses.