



Distance Course Design Standards Policy

Version: 2.0*

Responsible University Official: Provost

Effective Date: March 1, 2024

** This version replaces the Online Course Design Standards Policy.*

1.0 Introduction

To ensure quality, Saint Louis University commits to the standards for distance education as outlined in the [University Policy for Distance Education](#) and the [Saint Louis University Distance Course Design Rubric](#). The standards are based on the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions' (C-RAC) Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education and have been developed specifically with SLU's context and mission in mind. Adherence to the Distance Course Design Rubric is evaluated via the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process. Saint Louis University faculty with experience in online/distance instruction serve as Peer Reviewers for the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process. All courses must pass the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process prior to being offered to students for academic credit. Distance courses are required to undergo Peer Review every five years using the Distance Course Design Rubric in place at that time.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all current and future distance education courses, in all distance formats, offered by Saint Louis University. Courses that do not adhere to this policy are not eligible to be offered online/in a distance format until all of the criteria in the Distance Course Design Rubric meet the required rating.

3.0 Definitions

This policy employs definitions used in the [University Policy for Distance Education](#).

4.0 Policy Statement

Distance Course Design Requirements

1. All existing and new online/distance courses must align with the Distance Course Design Standards as outlined in the Distance Course Design Rubric.
2. Online/distance courses existing prior to the approval of this policy must undergo the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process and meet the Distance Course Design Standards as outlined in the Distance Course Design Rubric.
3. All new online/distance courses must undergo the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process and meet the Distance Course Design Standards as outlined in the Distance Course Design Rubric prior to student offering. In rare, extenuating circumstances, a course may be offered without having met all rubric criteria, but the course will not be offered again by the same instructor until it has successfully passed the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process.
4. Online/distance courses are required to undergo the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process every five years using the current Distance Course Design Standards as outlined in the Distance Course Design Rubric.
5. Previously approved courses that will be taught by a different instructor:
 - a. in which the course site in the LMS is duplicated and to which minor changes are made to the course site do not require re-review.
 - b. in which the course site in the LMS is duplicated and to which substantial changes are made to the course site require successful completion of the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process to ensure alignment with the Distance Course Design Standards.
 - c. in which the instructor creates a new course site in the LMS requires successful completion of the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process to ensure alignment with the Distance Course Design Standards.
6. Distance courses must be ready for the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process no later than four weeks prior to the course start date.
7. A course may be reviewed by the Distance Course Design Peer Review Process at any time at the request of the Chair, Dean, and/or Chief Online Learning Officer.

5.0 Approvals

This policy was:

1. Approved by Distance Education Advisory Committee: *October 11, 2019*
2. Approved by CADD: *October 16, 2019*
3. Approved by Interim Provost Chet Gillis: *October 16, 2019*
4. Revised by the Distance Education Committee: *December 7, 2023*
5. Revision approved by CADD: *February 28, 2024*
6. Revision approved by Provost Mike Lewis: *February 28, 2024*

