University Policy for Distance Education

Version: **2.0**   Responsible University Official: **Provost**

Effective Date: **January 1, 2023**

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide institution-level standards and definitions for distance education to ensure the academic quality for which SLU is known is maintained throughout our distance education programs and courses, and to address regulatory compliance.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all University distance education programs and courses as defined in the Definitions section of this policy.

3.0 Definitions

Definitions in this policy are informed by regulatory expectations from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) and requirements from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Because the USDOE and HLC definitions for distance education differ from one another, we have used those definitions as a foundation on which to establish institutionally-appropriate definitions for   ,   , and   , all of which allow us to comply with federal regulations and accreditor expectations. Please note: the definitions here were developed to guide quality assurance and compliance but may differ from those used for external reporting purposes; however, the definitions have been developed in collaboration with multiple University offices to ensure coding schemas across University systems allow for accurate reporting as required by external stakeholders.

Distance Education: education that uses technology (i) to deliver instruction/facilitate learning for students who are physically separated from the instructor and (ii) to support   (defined below) between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously.

Distance Programs (distance-delivered programs): certificate or degree programs designed so that 75% or more of all courses counting toward the certificate or degree may be taken as distance-delivered courses. Some programs may not be *exclusively* distance-delivered, as in the case of programs that allow students to complete the certificate or degree through either distance or in-person courses.

Distance Courses (distance-delivered courses): courses in which 75% or more of the instruction and interaction occurs via technology, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other. All distance courses must meet expectations for
as defined in this policy, regardless of format (asynchronous, synchronous, etc.)

Regular and substantive interaction: a term used by the USDOE and HLC to ensure distance education is appropriately interactive and facilitated by the instructor. According to the USDOE:

Synchronous Online Course: A distance-delivered course in which 75% or more of the instruction and interaction occurs online, with the instructor and students engaged in online or web conferencing
that is published at the time of course registration.

Dual-Mode Course: A co-synchronous course in which students learn together, in real time, with some students located together in an in-person classroom and some students participating in the live class session via web conferencing technology physically separated from the instructor. Dual-mode courses involve two distinct (dual-listed) sections. Students are required to register either for the in-person section or the remote participation section. Students registered for the remote participation section are expe

b. Planning documents are explicit about any goals to increase the number of distance education programs and courses as well as student enrollment in new and existing

c. The University regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the academic and support services provided t