

OUTLINE OF ELEMENTS FOR DISTANCE DELIVERED PROGRAM PROPOSALS

Proposals for new academic programs should follow the “Authorization to Plan” process and guidelines provided in UH Executive Policy E5.201, Appendix B. Proposals for the distance delivery of both new and existing academic programs must include the items on the following outline, as appropriate. The outline is intended as an aid to the writing and the review of distance delivered program proposals at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. The text is adapted, more often taken directly, from the *WASC Substantive Proposal Guidelines*.

Section I: Institutional and Program Overview

Program Overview

- A. What is the degree or program proposed including the proposed delivery mode?
- B. What percent of the program will be offered via distance education? If the program is not being offered fully via distance education, how will the remainder of the program be offered?
- C. Provide a detailed description of the type of distance education modality being proposed and the format. Is it asynchronous, synchronous, online, telecommunication, video on demand, etc.?
- D. What is the geographic scope of program?
- E. What is the projected number of students?
- F. What type of student is the program geared for, i.e. adult learners, part-time or full-time?
- G. What is the proposed initial date of offering?
- H. What is the anticipated life of the program, i.e., one time only or ongoing? Cohort model or rolling admissions? Independent study?
- I. Describe the external and/or internal partners contributing and/or participating in this proposal, if applicable. If so, attach any Memorandums of Understanding (final and signed) between the requisite parties.
- J. Is the program already offered on campus or at other off-campus sites? Does this proposal constitute a significant increase in these kinds of programs? How many other programs of this type are offered?

Descriptive Background, History, and Context

- A. Provide a brief description of the school/college including the broader institutional context in which the new program or change will exist. Connect the anticipated substantive change with the mission, purpose and strategic plan of UH Mānoa and your school/ college.
- B. To address prior experience, list the number, variety and longevity of other similar programs that have been or are being offered via distance education by the college/school.

Institutional Accrediting History Relevant to Substantive Change

- A. Brief response to issues noted in prior substantive change reviews since the institution's last comprehensive review. (to be completed by OVCAA, if applicable)
- B. Institutional response to issues noted in prior Commission or other Committee action letters or visiting team reports that are relevant to the proposed substantive change. (to be completed by OVCAA, if applicable)
- C. If the proposed program is within a school accredited by a professional accrediting agency, or is related to a program that is accredited by a professional accrediting agency, list the agency, year accredited, and include in the appendix a copy of the executive summary to the most recent team evaluation report and agency action. Also, indicate whether the specialized agency needs to review and approve the proposed program prior to implementation.

Section II: Program Need and Approval

Proposals should describe the context in which the decision to offer the program by distance modes exists. Of particular importance is a clear understanding of the process by which key faculty, staff, and administrators considered, reviewed, and approved the proposal.

Program Need

- A. What is the need/rationale for the program framed by the institution's mission and strategic goals?
- B. Discuss the process and results used to establish the need. Please provide a summary of the findings, not the full study.
- C. What evidence was used to support enrollment projections and to support the conclusion that interest in the program is sufficient to sustain it at expected levels. If the program is planned to be offered for a finite period, provide the enrollment data for the length of the program. If the program is planned to be offered continuously, then provide enrollment projections for the first three years. These enrollment projections should be reflected in the budget.

- D. Attach the recruitment and/or marketing plan for the program.

Planning/Approval Process

- A. Describe the planning and approval process within the institution, indicating how faculty and other groups (administrators, trustees, stakeholders, etc.) were involved in the review and approval of the new program.
- B. For sites outside the state or country in which the home campus is located, provide evidence that any necessary state licensure or approval has been attained. For delivery to other countries, discuss the legal requirements for operating in the proposed country and provide evidence that all legal authority to operate has been obtained.

Section III: Program Description and Evaluation

Curriculum

- A. Provide an overall description of the program including the alignment of the program philosophy, curricular design, and pedagogical methods with the target population and degree nomenclature selected.
- B. Describe the curricular design of the program. Special emphasis should be placed on general education, if a baccalaureate program is offered. Special emphasis should be placed on requirements definitions and how they will be met, degree nomenclature, and the nature of the research environment, if a doctoral program is proposed. Has the method of design of the program been reflected in the curricular design and pedagogy?
- C. What are the program's learning outcomes? (Outcomes should articulate what the student will be able to do after he/she completes the program and should be appropriate to the level of the degree.) Discuss how the learning outcomes are aligned with student learning needs, pedagogical methods, and the format of the program.
- D. Provide a curricular map articulating the alignment between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes and demonstrating the progression from introductory to advanced levels.
- E. Provide a listing of courses, identifying which are required.
- F. Describe the process by which syllabi are reviewed and approved to ensure that 1) course learning outcomes are described and are linked to program learning outcomes, 2) materials are current, and 3) pedagogy is appropriate for the modality of the course.
- G. Attach three sample syllabi that are representative of the program and attach the capstone/thesis or culminating experience syllabus (if applicable). Syllabi should include specific student learning outcomes for the course, be adapted to the modality of the

course, and be appropriate to the level of the degree. Syllabi should also reflect information literacy requirements and use of the library.

- H. What are the internship requirements and monitoring procedures, if an internship is required?
- I. What are the special requirements for graduation, i.e. comprehensive examination, service learning, etc.?

Schedule/Format

- A. Describe the length of time that the typical student is expected to complete all requirements for the program.
- B. Describe the cohort or registration model being used for the distance delivered program and the provisions for students who have to drop out of a cohort for a period of time. What are the minimum attendance/participation requirements and the provisions made for students to make up missed assignments?
- C. How will the program ensure that timely and appropriate levels of interactions between students and faculty, and among students are maintained?
- D. Describe the timeframe of the courses, i.e., accelerated, weekend, traditional, etc. If the course timeframe is abbreviated, how will students be accorded adequate time to reflect on the material presented in class? Faculty using the accelerated course format should be expected to require pre- and post-course assignments, as appropriate. Course syllabi for accelerated courses should be adjusted to reflect the pre- and post-course assignments, and the accelerated nature of the curriculum.
- E. Provide a sample schedule of courses for a full cycle of the program, with faculty assignments, if available.

Admissions

- A. What are the admission requirements for the program?
- B. Identify the type of student targeted and qualifications required for the program.
- C. How many credits are required for the program? How many credits may the students transfer into the program?
- D. For undergraduate programs only, will credits be allowed for prior learning? How will the credit determination be made?
- E. What are the residency requirements, i.e., the number of credits that students must take from UH Mānoa, for the program?
- F. Provide a sample brochure or admissions material.

- G. Programs proposed for delivery to international sites should also address the following:
 - a. Are there special admissions requirements for international students?
 - b. What are the English language proficiency requirements for admission and graduation?
 - c. Will the program be taught in English? If not, please refer to WASC guidelines for teaching in a foreign language.
 - d. Describe the extent to which the program will be adapted to the local culture.

Plan for Evaluating Educational Effectiveness *Educational effectiveness is one of the Core Commitments on which the WASC Standards of Accreditation are based. The distance delivery proposal should describe the new program in terms of how it defines educational effectiveness at the program level and should include the following.*

- A. Describe the plan for assessing the program at various stages in the first year including achievement of student learning outcomes and how findings from the review will be used to improve the program. Attach the assessment plan.
- B. Provide the plan for incorporating assessment of this program into the school and/or institution's existing program review process.
- C. How will the educational effectiveness of distance learning programs (including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student satisfaction) be evaluated including appropriate comparisons with campus-based programs?
- D. If the program is offered on campus or in a traditional format, include a summary of a recent program review to determine if changes have been made to the proposed program.
- E. How will the student's ability to succeed in distance education programs be addressed and linked to admission and recruiting policies and decisions?
- F. What procedures will be used to evaluate teaching effectiveness in the distance education modality?
- G. How will the program ensure the integrity of student work, degrees, and credits? This is especially relevant for online programs.
- H. For international programs, provide evidence that the standard of student learning and achievement in the international program is equivalent to the standard expected of students on the Mānoa campus.

Section IV: Resources

Faculty

- A. Specify the number and type (full-time, part-time, tenured, non-tenured) of faculty allocated to support the distance delivered program in terms of developing curriculum, delivering instruction to students, supervising internships and dissertations, and evaluating educational effectiveness.
- B. Describe the balance of full- and part-time faculty members involved in the distance delivered program. Discuss how that balance will ensure quality and consistency in instruction and advising.
- C. What impact will the proposed program or change have on faculty workload for all involved in the program, including teaching, research, and scholarship? Who will teach courses no longer being taught by the faculty reassigned to this program? What will be the maximum number of students that each faculty member can advise?
- D. Describe the preparedness of faculty to support the modality of instruction. Are faculty development opportunities available? Include any faculty guidelines for online instruction.
- E. Provide an overview of the key credentials and experience of primary faculty responsible for the program. Include abbreviated vitae (3-5 pages) that demonstrate the most current activities in relationship to the program (scholarship, teaching, etc.).
- F. How will off-campus faculty be oriented to the particular needs of the programs and the ethos of the institution?

Student Support Services *Evidence that adequate services for students is provided in terms of learning resources, including academic advising, information about financial aid, and computer access must be documented. If electronic support is provided for off-site distance programs, the accessibility and reliability of these resources must be demonstrated.*

- A. Describe ongoing academic advising and academic support for students in the distance delivered program.
- B. Do students have financial aid advising and career placement services? Describe these services.
- C. Describe the availability of support services for students and faculty including help desk hours.
- D. Provide evidence that student learning resources and support services off-campus and online are consistent with the learning environment provided on the Mānoa campus.

Information Literacy and Library Resources *This section should include a description of what library and information resources, staffing, and instructional services have been put in place and are available to students and faculty in support of the level and subject emphasis of off-campus courses and/ or degree programs.*

- A. Describe the information literacy competencies expected of program graduates and how they will be evaluated.
- B. Describe how library resources will be used in curriculum.
- C. Describe what staffing and instructional services have been put in place and what library and informational resources are available to students and faculty in support of this program including a description of the library's information literacy program.
- D. If additional information literacy and library resources are deemed necessary, specify what these resources are and detail the college/institution's long-term financial commitment to implement this program.
- E. Describe access to library systems (local, national, or global), electronic services, Internet, information utilities, service providers, and document delivery services for both faculty and students.
- F. Describe staff and services available to students and faculty for instruction on how to use, access, and support information resources, onsite and remotely, as applicable.
- G. Discuss the impact of the program on the maintenance of Mānoa's libraries in terms of library and research support appropriate for the degree level of the program.
- H. Discuss the need for cooperative agreements regarding library services and resources with other institutions and provide copies of the agreements.

Technology

- A. Describe the school/college and institution's technological capacity to support teaching and learning in the proposed program. Describe the laboratories, facilities, equipment, hardware, and software that will be provided to support the courses and program being offered.
- B. Describe the institution's provisions for students in the proposed program to gain full access to course materials.
- C. Describe the level of technology proficiency expected of students and faculty and the minimum requirements for hardware/software that must be owned or acquired by the student, if any.
- D. Describe how students will receive training on how to utilize program-required technology.

- E. Describe how the institution will ensure business continuity during system failures (major or minor) or scheduled service interruptions.
- F. Describe the provisions available to faculty to ensure that the enrolled student is the student completing the coursework.
- G. Discuss how the technology used in delivering the program is appropriate.
- H. Describe the impact on the information technology infrastructure of the institution, school, or department if the proposed off-campus or distance education program relies on servers or other telecommunication infrastructures in use on the Mānoa campus. This should include addressing the impact on the internal technical support staff as well as end user, technical, and/or application support staff.
- I. Describe fees or special costs associated with computers or electronic access and communication required for enrollment.
- J. Describe copyright or site and license agreements that may affect support for faculty and students.

Physical Resources *All proposals should include a brief description of the impact of the proposed program on the physical resources capacity and structure of the institution. While the technology section describes the infrastructure and support systems necessary to offer telecommunications mediated programs, the physical learning environment (classrooms, study spaces, student support areas)--on or off-campus, or in the virtual sense--is also critical to educational effectiveness.*

- A. Describe the physical resources provided to support the proposed program.
- B. What is the impact of the proposed program on the physical resource capacity and structure of the institution? This includes, but is not limited to the physical learning environment, i.e., classrooms, study spaces, student support areas, etc.

Financial Resources *The financial resources section should assess the financial viability and sustainability of the program. This section should include the following.*

- A. Describe all start-up costs for the program and how the costs will be covered (including direct program cost and institutional indirect cost). Costs for licensing, hardware, software, technical support, training for faculty and students, and instructional design should be included.
- B. What is the total cost of the program to students, including tuition and any special fees?
- C. Describe the financial impact of the proposed program on the institution, including evidence of the capacity of the institution to absorb start-up costs.

- D. What is the minimum number of students per year necessary to make the program financially viable? The budget should reflect anticipated attrition and include plans to respond to low enrollment.
- E. Provide a three-to-five year budget projection based on the enrollment data in the market analysis, including projected revenues and costs. The budget should include all budgetary assumptions.
- F. For international sites and programs, discuss how the fiscal integrity and oversight of the program will be monitored.

Section V: Teach-out

- A. How will students who began the program finish if the institution determines that the program is to be closed?

Appendices

Only relevant documents should be provided as appendices, and these should be kept to a minimum. Syllabi and draft marketing material should be included as an appendix.

Memoranda of Understanding

Proposals regarding change in mission or legal status, or, where applicable, to implementation of new programs or sites, should provide copies of memoranda of understanding or related legal documents. When appropriate, any MOUs should also have been reviewed by legal counsel.

Copies of all Memoranda of Understanding with third parties for physical plant, library and computer resources (including external web-based curriculum design vendors) in final draft or completed form must be included with the proposal.

Resources

Good Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, updated September 26, 2008.

Principles of Good Practice in Overseas International Education Programs for non-US Nationals, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, updated September 9, 2008.