



Distance Education FAQs

- How do I calculate the percentage of my curriculum that is done at a distance?

Calculate the percentage based on credits. For example, if you have 100 didactic credits (do not include APPE credits) and 4 of your courses are offered via distance education, one is a four credit course, two are 3 credit courses and one is a one credit course, the calculation would be $11/100 = 0.11 = 11\%$.

- How do I count my hybrid courses where part of the course is online and part of the course requires the student to be on campus and physically present in class/lab/recitation?

If 50% or more of the course is taught online or virtually, then the course counts as distance education and the full course credits count towards the distance education calculation. If 49% or less of the course is taught online, then the course does not need to count towards the distance education credit load.

- We record all of our lectures for either a distance campus or to allow students the opportunity to re-watch a lecture but expect that students will attend class. Do recorded lectures count as distance education?

If the expectation is that the student is to come to class and interact in-person with the faculty, then recorded lectures do not constitute distance education even if a student misses a class and watches the recorded lecture after it has been given. However, if you have a cohort of students (e.g., a separate pathway) that are not required to attend class and are required to complete these classes virtually or via recorded lectures, that would count toward the percentage of your program that is offered at a distance. In that instance, the use of recorded lectures, however, would only satisfy the definition of “distance education” (pursuant to the U.S. Department of Education’s definition, which ACPE has adopted) if such use requires regular and substantive virtual interaction between the students and the instructor.

- We provide background material for a class virtually/online. However, the student is required to come to class after watching the material for facilitation/classwork (e.g. flipped classroom), does this count as distance education?

If 50% or more of the class time is spent in-person in the classroom interacting with a faculty member, then the course does not count as distance education.

- I am confused about the percentages. Is it 25% or 50% of the curriculum delivered via distance education that requires reporting?

ACPE requires that any program that delivers 25% or more of the didactic curriculum via distance education (after the conclusion of the pandemic as determined by the U.S. Department of Education – date will be announced once known) provide ACPE notification of this substantive change per our policy and the recent letter sent to Deans on March 9th. Please describe your curriculum and list all of the courses and associated credit hours and indicate which courses are being taught virtually. However, to further clarify the March 9th letter, if the distance education component of the curriculum is between 25-49%, notice to ACPE is all that is required. As stated in the ACPE Policies and Procedures, this notice must be given to ACPE at least one year prior to offering at least 25% of a program via distance education.

If the distance education component exceeds 50% then a comprehensive academic plan will need to be submitted as outlined in Addendum 5 of the policies and procedures. For a program that offers 50% or more of its curriculum in a distance education format, or has a cohort of students receiving 50% or more via distance education instruction, ACPE views that as an on-line or distance education pathway towards the Doctor of Pharmacy degree. There are a number of implications and steps the college or school must be aware of and complete to be classified as an on-line or distance education pathway. However, the first step is to notify ACPE and discuss the implications with ACPE staff as you explore the possibility of establishing such a distance education pathway to ensure you are fully aware of these requirements and expectations and can be compliant.