

**THREE RIVERS COLLEGE  
INSTRUCTION POLICY**

Section: 6000 Instruction	
Sub Section: 6500 Distance Learning	
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Associated Regulations: IR 6520 Online Learning; IR 6310 Classroom Attendance; IR 6211 Curriculum Development; ITR 8100 Acceptable Use; IR 6720 Faculty Workload; IR 6715 Faculty Evaluation and Engagement; SR 2610 Student Code of Conduct; SR 2740 Student Rights and Responsibilities; SR 2140 Student Appeals; SR 2620 Disciplinary Proceedings; SR 2130 Student Grievance	
Associated Policies: IP 6310 Classroom Attendance; ITP 8100 Acceptable Use; IP 6210 Curriculum Development; IP 6104 Minimum Class Size; IP 6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities; GAP 1140 Institutional Effectiveness; IP 6110 Definition of a Credit Hour	
References: Higher Learning Commission Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (Online Learning); Federal Department of Education 34 CFR 600.2	
Supersedes: NA	
Responsible Administrator: Chief Academic Officer	
Initial Approval: 06-21-2017	Last Revision: 11-15-2023

Three Rivers College offers quality programs and courses delivered by distance means. The College utilizes distance learning to increase student access to learning opportunities; enhance the abilities of the college to respond to learner needs; respond to workforce development needs; ensure quality of instruction to place- and time-bound students; provide cost-effective service through cooperative and collaborative development and delivery; and reduce the unnecessary duplication of existing programs and courses.

Distance learning is defined as education that uses one or more technological means listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously.

- The internet;
- One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, broadband, fiber optic, satellite, or wireless communication devices;
- Audio conference; or
- Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above. [34 CFR 600.2]

Distance learning courses are delivered synchronously or asynchronously. Synchronous classes require both the students and the instructor to be online at the same time. They meet at a set day and time for lecture, discussion, presentation, or other activities. Asynchronous classes do not require students and the instructor to be online at the same time. Students can access lectures and resources at any time.

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Regular and substantive interaction is expected in all distance learning courses. Regular interaction between a student and instructor is ensured by:

- Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with students on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and amount of content in the course or competency; and
- Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student. [34 CFR 600.2]

Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following:

- Providing direct instruction;
- Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
- Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
- Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency;
- Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency. [34 CFR 600.2]

Courses offered through distance learning modalities must meet the same requirements and quality standards as those established for credit coursework offered through a traditional classroom setting. Quality standards include, but are not limited to, academic policies and procedural requirements related to curriculum and program development, application of the Quality Matters rubric to online courses, assessment, review and approval processes, faculty

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course load and evaluation criteria, continuous improvement of instruction, a focus on student performance, student evaluation of instruction, emphasis on teacher-student engagement, and student support services. To ensure quality standards, the following applies for courses offered through distance learning:

- Distance learning courses offered for credit or audit must originate from and reside under the control of the academic unit that has responsibility for those respective courses.
- The course learning outcomes taught through distance learning must be identical to the outcomes for traditional courses as noted in the syllabus. Additionally, any courses being considered for distance learning modalities must be initiated through and approved by the Chief Academic Officer.
- All new courses and programs, regardless of their delivery, must be developed, reviewed, and approved through the same College curriculum and program development processes in accordance with policy IP 6210 Curriculum Development.
- Distance learning courses must follow all college policies, regulations, and procedures relating to admissions, attendance, registration, audits, withdrawals, class size, credit hours, etc., as outlined in the current College Catalog, and are subject to the requirements as outlined in policy and regulation ITP and ITR 8100 Acceptable Use.

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- Courses taught through distance learning must follow the same class size requirements as published in the College’s policy IP 6104 Minimum Class Size. Any exceptions require the approvals as outlined in the policy.
- Only courses approved by the Chief Academic Officer each semester/session are offered through distance learning modalities. All courses offered through distance learning modalities are identified and published in the College’s Course Schedule.

The college ensures faculty are qualified. Faculty teaching courses through distance learning adhere to the course load requirements and college obligations as set forth in regulation IR 6720 Faculty Workload as well as policy IP 6710 Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

Faculty teaching courses through distance learning are evaluated according to the college’s regulation IR 6715 Faculty Evaluation and Engagement and participate in the college’s assessment and standardized student opinion of instruction processes.

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are afforded comparable student support and access to learning resources and services as compared to those offered to students in traditional courses. Distance learning students are subject to the same college policies and procedures as published for all students.

Distance learning students have the same rights and responsibilities as outlined in regulations SR 2610 Student Code of Conduct and SR 2740 Student Rights and Responsibilities. The college is committed to affording all students, including distance learning students, the opportunity for accessibility and due process during the student complaint process in

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accordance with regulations SR 2140 Student Appeals, SR 2620 Student Disciplinary Proceedings, and SR 2130 Student Grievance Procedures.

The Chief Academic Officer is charged with administering the provisions of all distance learning policies, regulations, and procedures.

**Three Rivers College offers the following course types:**

**Traditional/Web-Enhanced:**

Course is delivered in a traditional face-to-face classroom environment where the instructor and students are in the same place. A face-to-face course can be supplemented with an online component for accessing the syllabus, notes, PowerPoints, videos, etc., but students are expected to attend all class sessions in person. 100% of the course content is delivered face-to-face.

**Hybrid:**

A hybrid course combines face-to-face class time with online components for accessing or submitting course work. Hybrid courses meet a portion of time in an online classroom setting as outlined in the course syllabus. Students will be expected to attend scheduled class sessions in person and complete course work online. 30-70% of the course is delivered face-to-face in the classroom with the remaining content delivered asynchronously online.

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**Synchronous Online:**

A synchronous online course is delivered online; however, students are required to attend virtual class sessions with the instructor via video conferencing technology at a specifically scheduled time outlined in the course syllabus. 30-70% of course content is delivered face-to-face through web-conferencing, with the remaining content delivered asynchronously online.

**Online:**

A course in which all content, activities, and instruction are delivered online asynchronously. In most cases, there are no required face-to-face sessions and no requirements of on-campus activity. Some courses may require testing, proctoring, or other in-person activities which will be communicated in the course syllabus. 100% of the course content is delivered online.

**ITV (Interactive Television):**

An interactive television (ITV) course replicates a face-to-face classroom by using web conferencing or other technology to provide interactive real-time (synchronous) communication between the instructor and students at the campus and/or external locations. An ITV course can be supplemented with an online component for accessing the syllabus, notes, PowerPoints, videos, etc., but students are expected to attend all class sessions in person. 100% of the course content is delivered face-to-face in the classroom or through video conferencing.

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**DOCUMENT HISTORY:**

- 06-21-2017:** Initial approval of policy IP 6510 Distance Learning.
- 11-15-2023:** Clarifications to align with Federal regulation 34 CFR 600.2 and minor edits to align with college operations.