



Distance Learning Faculty Handbook

JSUOnline

Effective 2013-14
Jackson State University
Division of Academic Affairs

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Part 1. Introduction [Back to Top](#)

Distance learning is an educational delivery method where students work on their own and communicate with faculty and other students through the University's learning management system, which is accessed via the Internet. Classroom activities occur through various media, such as email, electronic forums, videoconferencing, chat rooms, discussion boards, instant messaging and other forms of computer-based activities.

Distance Learning (DL) includes fully online and blended courses and is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Interaction between the instructor and the student is regular and substantive, and either initiated by the instructor or the student.

A. Purpose

The purpose of Jackson State University (JSU) Distance Learning (DL) Handbook is to ensure consistency and quality in the delivery of online, blended and hybrid instruction. The policy assures that the planning, development, and implementation of distance learning activities are in accordance with the mission of the University. Jackson State's main goal is to utilize distance learning to provide quality instruction to traditional and nontraditional students with technological media such as computers, video, and the Internet. The University is committed to providing distant students quality instruction, access to library resources, and all other learning resources provided to traditional or face-to-face students.

B. Principles of Good Practice

All distance learning courses and online degree programs are conducted in accordance with the University's established policies and procedures as outlined in the current editions of the *Jackson State University Undergraduate or Graduate Catalogs*. *JSUOnline* will follow Best Practices, such as those published by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges "Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs," the Southern Regional Education's Board's "Standards for Quality Online Courses" and "Standards for Quality Online Teaching", and all standards set forth by the discipline-specific accrediting bodies that accredit our degree programs.

C. Organizational Structure

The Division of Academic Affairs (DAA) supervises *JSUOnline* and its personnel. The DAA oversees academic compliance with the policies and procedures established by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning and those of accrediting, certifying, and sanctioning bodies, to ensure that courses and programs are developed and offered in a manner that satisfies the relevant standards.

The *JSUOnline* **Implementation Team** is concerned with planning and implementing the University's distance learning program. The team is comprised of the executive director and staff of *JSUOnline*, **at least one faculty representative and an alternate from each academic department**, and one representative from each of the following offices: enrollment management, academic technology, libraries, and the student government association. The team advocates for the University's distance education program; provides leadership and assistance to departmental colleagues in the development and implementation of online courses and degree programs; plays an active role in establishing and monitoring compliance with distance learning processes and procedures; and advises strategic planning and implementation of distance education. The Online Implementation Team reports to the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

D. Review of Policy and Compliance

The responsibility for evaluating and revising distance learning processes and procedures is that of the Division of Academic and Student Affairs.

Part 2. Key Definitions

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Accessibility means that people with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, interact, and contribute in a course. In a distance-learning course, accessibility is determined by the features of the instructional technologies provided by the University and by the manner in which faculty members use those technologies to create materials and design courses.

Asynchronous means not at the same time. Tools such as email and discussion boards, allow participants to communicate without having to be online at the same time.

Class Attendance occurs by the active participation of the students through the completion of class activities. Examples include submitting an assignment, completing an exam, attending an online chat, or posting to a discussion forum. Note: Simply logging into the course within the learning management system is not attendance.

Delivery Mode is the primary method or technology used to deliver instructional information to the student and used for communication between the instructor and the students. Methods of course delivery at JSU include the following:

Online courses are taught 100% online using a combination of asynchronous and synchronous activities, which offers greater flexibility in scheduling and convenience of access to students. This method allows the students to accomplish the same learning outcomes and to experience the same level of rigor achieved in traditional courses. Dates and times for required online synchronous activities are published in the instructor's weekly course schedule. At JSU, online courses include sections 70-72, 80-89, and 100-109.

Canvas enhanced traditional courses are taught in a face-to-face classroom setting. The syllabus and other materials are posted online and students may be asked to submit some work electronically. There is only a minimal amount of online activities and the course meets primarily in the traditional classroom all semester. The course instructor, to ensure that the Canvas enhanced course is not substituting for traditional classroom meetings, should exercise caution.

Blended or Hybrid courses combine the best of traditional classroom instruction and online instruction. They may also use a combination of face-to-face instruction and online activities in Canvas or a publisher website. Students meet face-to-face for at least 51% of the scheduled course sections and complete the rest of their coursework online. It is not simply an online course that requires in-class exams. These courses allow faculty and students the opportunity to build strong personal relationships through face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to explore new types of learning activities that was not possible in traditional courses. Dates and times for required online synchronous activities are published in the instructor's weekly course schedule. At JSU, blended or hybrid courses include sections 60-69 and 79.

Interactive video allows two-way video and audio exchanges between students and instructors located at two or more sites.

Satellite is similar to interactive video, but the video is one-way. The students can see the instructor but the instructor cannot see the students.

Telecourses allow student to watch a pre-recorded video lesson, pre-produced program broadcasted through cable TV or visit a local viewing center to review lessons and lectures.

Traditional courses are taught primarily face-to-face.

Instructional Technology is a key service of *JSUOnline*, which provides faculty professional development opportunities in the identification and use of various technologies to deliver course content.

Learning Management System (LMS) is a web-accessible software application that provides for the administration of course content, delivery of assessments, communication and collaboration between students and instructors, and the ability to track grades and other relevant performance data. Jackson State is currently licensing Canvas™ from Canvas, Instructure as its learning management system.

Online students use a computer and the Internet to access course materials, including the use of email, threaded discussions, simulations, multimedia, chat rooms, and more.

Synchronous means “occurring at the same time.” Synchronous tools (e.g. text chat, audio chat, video chat, or Web conferencing) require all participants to be online at the same time.

Part 3. Academic Administration

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A. Academic Calendar

Distance learning courses follow the same academic terms as traditional courses. Full-term distance learning courses will begin during the first official week of the semester and conclude during the final exam period at the end of the semester. Half-term (eight-week) distance learning courses will begin during the first official week of the half-term and conclude during the half-term's final exam period. The academic calendar is accessible in print and on the University's web site.

B. Holidays

Consistent with the University's academic calendar, if the University is closed, distance learning classes will not meet. While students are not required to submit coursework on those days, they are free to work on courses on their own. Faculty may not be available to respond to student communications until classes resume. * The holiday calendar does not apply to online degree programs.

C. Weather Policy

The weather policy will only apply to Hybrid courses. The decision to cancel online courses due to inclement weather is at the discretion of the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. In such cases, an official statement concerning online activities will be issued via normal emergency channels.

Part 4. Online Course Approval

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A. Course Approval

The JSU Curriculum Committee, whose members represent each college, reviews all courses to be offered at the University. The Committee's procedures are described in the Curriculum Review Process. That process ensures that all courses of the same prefix and number will have the same learning outcomes and level of rigor, regardless of delivery mode.

Canvas is the web-based course development program (i.e. Learning Management System) that is authorized by JSU. Courses taught through the University's distance education program must be delivered via Canvas, be approved and recommended by the departments and colleges, and submitted to *JSUOnline* for final approval.

B. Modifying Existing Courses

Traditional courses may be modified for distance learning. Prior to offering the course online, it must be approved by *JSUOnline*. To initiate the approval process, the following items must be submitted for review:

1. Syllabi for online courses
2. Course Action Form
3. Course Proposal Form
4. Assigned or proposed online instructor

Forms require the signature of the department chair and dean; this indicates that the course has met the requirements as set forth by the University's traditional course approval procedures (University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Curriculum Committee, and Graduate Council).

This packet of items will be reviewed and approved by the executive director/assistant director of *JSUOnline*, based on compliance with University policies and procedures and certification of the course instructor(s).

Where necessary, the executive director/assistant director will convene the *JSUOnline* Online Implementation Team to review policy issues and matters pertaining to online courses.

To assist the instructor with evaluating the template, technical aspects and pedagogy of the online course, the Quality Matters Rubric, an online course evaluation rubric is provided in the appendices.

C. Creating New Courses

New course approval is initiated within the department and requires submission of a syllabus along with signed approval forms to the appropriate traditional course approval bodies (department/college/school curriculum committees, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Curriculum Committee, and/or Graduate Council).

Distance learning course action and proposal forms must also be included at this time, if the course (or any portion of it) will be offered online. After the course has been approved through traditional processes, the staff of *JSUOnline* will review all documents for compliance with online instruction and approve the course or return to the initiator for modification. Where necessary, the director/assistant director will convene the advisory committee to review policy issues and matters pertaining to online courses.

JSUOnline must approve the course before it is offered online.

D. Hybrid Courses

The University encourages faculty members to use Canvas for course and content delivery. For example, even though a course may not be taught online, Canvas may be used to disseminate assignments and course materials.

If students must take examinations or receive credit for work assigned or submitted via Canvas, in lieu of classroom attendance, the course is considered hybrid and therefore must be approved by *JSUOnline*. Approval is gained by submitting a syllabus for the course including activities that will occur online with the appropriate signed distance learning course approval forms.

The course must obtain distance learning course approval from *JSUOnline*, if any three of the following course elements are distributed via Canvas:

1. Assignments
2. Quizzes
3. Papers
4. Chat sessions
5. Email communications

The appropriate forms for DL course approval may be found in the appendix section of this document or on the Internet at: <http://www.jsuonline.edu/jsuonline>.

E. Canvas Enhanced

Faculty who wish to have limited use of Canvas (i.e., upload syllabi, handouts, assignments, etc.) must complete a Master Schedule File (M form) to request Canvas Course Delivery as a supplement to the traditional classroom.

F. Submitting the Master Schedule File (M Form)

Each semester that a course is taught online, as a hybrid or Canvas enhanced, the instructor must prepare and submit the M Form for approval. The template for the M Form is available on the Division of Academic Affairs' and the *JSUOnline*'s websites.

The completed M Form, including all required signatures, must be submitted to the Division of Academic Affairs. Once the form is reviewed and signed by Academic Affairs, it is forwarded to *JSUOnline*. The *JSUOnline* staff will review its records to determine if the course has been approved for online or hybrid and if the instructor has been certified to teach online. If the course(s) does not meet these criteria, the M Form will be returned to the department and instructor with an explanation.

The approved M Form will be signed by the Executive Director and forwarded from *JSUOnline* to the Registrar who will post and publicize the online course in the Class Schedule.

G. Offering an Online Course(s)

Instructors must abide by the following schedule for offering courses that have been approved for online instruction:

- June 1 Fall semester course(s)
- October 1 Spring semester course(s)
- March 1 Summer and Inter-session

Part 5. Online Instructors

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A. Faculty Credentials

Faculty members who teach distance-learning courses must possess comparable academic credentials as faculty who teach traditional courses at Jackson State University. That is, each faculty member must possess at least a master's degree with eighteen (18) hours of specialization in the teaching field for teaching at the undergraduate level. Relative to credentials, adjunct faculty members are held to the same standard as full-time faculty.

B. Faculty Load

The full-time teaching load for JSU undergraduate faculty is 12 semester hours during fall or spring semesters. The full-time teaching load for graduate faculty is nine (9) semester hours during fall and spring semesters.

During the summer, the full-time teaching load for undergraduate faculty is three (3) semester hours each session for a total of six (6) semester hours; for graduate faculty, the full-time teaching load is six (6) semester hours for the eight-week graduate session.

Online courses are a part of the regular teaching load. The decision regarding the number of online courses taught by a faculty member is that of the department chairperson and college dean.

C. Office Hours

Office Hours Members of the teaching faculty are expected to be actively engaged at the work site in position-related responsibilities a minimum of 30 hours per week. A part of these 30 hours of general service will be used for on-campus conference and office hours as well as for class preparation and University assignments. The specific number of office hours required is discipline specific and will be communicated to faculty members by the department chair.

Once a schedule of office hours is developed each semester, a copy of the hours must be submitted to the department chair and posted prominently for students' use. Faculty members who are engaged in modes of instructional delivery other than traditional classroom instruction (i.e., online instruction, video teleconferencing, etc.) are expected to adhere to the requirements above as are all faculty at the university. A faculty member or adjunct instructor may set a minimum of 1.5 hours for each distance learning course as virtual (online) office hours.

Office hours and communication modes will be clearly defined in the course syllabus and/or course calendar.

D. Faculty Compensation

Full-time faculty members teaching online courses in a traditional program receive no additional compensation for those courses beyond normal guidelines. If teaching an online course results in the faculty member teaching more than the maximum number of required teaching hours for the term, the decision to provide additional compensation for overload or extra services is that of the department chair.

Compensation for online adjunct faculty will be determined by Academic Affairs.

E. Faculty Responsibility

The course instructor is responsible for the course content, content delivery, student evaluation, assessing learning outcomes, and timely communication within the online learning course. Faculty will evaluate online courses at the end of each term, to determine currency of materials.

Jackson State University's *JSUOnline* certifies faculty to teach online. The approval process requires that instructors successfully complete the following three foundational training courses:

Required Foundational Courses

- DL 501 – Introduction to Canvas
- DL 502 – Designing and Creating Courses in Canvas
- DL 503 – Best Practices for Teaching Online

Training is usually blended, where faculty are in a traditional classroom but receiving online instruction. This training method allows the trainer to provide hands-on assistance and the instructor to practice using the online system.

Faculty knowledge and skills are assessed during the training or immediately following. Faculty member are certified as “proficient” or “not proficient” after the training is completed. Canvas Foundational Courses are offered online and face-to-face.

F. Continuing Education in Distance Learning

Faculty teaching online courses will have knowledge and skills of contemporary technologies and pedagogical techniques by participating in individual and group professional development activities.

After successfully completing the foundational trainings, faculty are encouraged to enhance their proficiency in the use of Canvas tools, in order to enhance instruction and content delivery. The following courses are provided to enhance online teaching proficiency:

Canvas Tools for Experienced Users

- DL 601 – Universal Design Principles
- DL 602 – Creating Quizzes, Surveys & Assessments in Canvas
- DL 702 – Mastering Canvas's Grades
- DL 703 – Using Blogs, Wikis, and Journals in Canvas
- DL 704 – Using Audio and Video in Canvas
- DL 705 – Using Web Conferencing Tools

The *JSUOnline* staff also offers the courses to train the faculty in the use of contemporary and emerging uses of technology.

Assessment of faculty knowledge and skills occurs during training or immediately following. A faculty member is deemed “proficient” or “not proficient” after the training is completed.

H. Continuing Education for Teaching Enhancement

Online faculty, as are all University faculty, are encouraged to engage in continuous professional development to improve instruction. Following is a list of topics suggested to online instructors for study and professional enhancement:

- Effective online communications
- APA Guidelines
- Plagiarism
- Copyrighting
- Critical thinking
- Providing constructive feedback in an online environment
- Working with challenging students
- Motivating students to learn
- Creating a positive learning environment

- Effective online pedagogy

I. Certification

JSU*Online* awards two certificates: (1) A Certificate of Completion and (2) A Certification of Participation.

A Certificate of Completion denotes “proficient,” while a Certificate of Participation documents the faculty member’s participation in the training session.

J. Staff Support

JSU*Online* employs full-time staff who advise and assist JSU faculty on all phases of online instruction, including course development, instructional design, and content delivery. Support is provided individually or during group training.

K. E-mail

Faculty e-mail accounts are created by Human Resources at the “effective hire date”. All online faculty must use the email account provided by Jackson State University to communicate with students and personnel.

Part 6. Academic Content and Instruction

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A. Accreditation Requirements

Jackson State University will comply with the regional standards and requirements of its institutional accreditor – the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACS) – and the national accreditation requirements or standards of the colleges, schools, and departments. The SACS Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs is available at <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/commadap.pdf>.

B. Copyright Compliance

Faculty members are expected to understand and adhere to the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code), as updated by the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization Act (TEACH Act). Copyright law must be followed when performances, displays, copies or other reproductions of copyrighted material are made available to students. This includes the posting of copyrighted material to the University's learning management system (i.e., Canvas) or to other online sites. Under the TEACH Act, it is permissible to make copyrighted materials available to students, providing that such materials (1) do not exceed an amount or duration comparable to that typically displayed in a live classroom setting; (2) are directly related to the course content; (3) are an integral part of the teaching content; (4) are intended solely for and are available only to students enrolled in the course; and (5) are retained only for the class session. The students must be notified that the materials may be subject to copyright protection.

C. Ownership of Educational Materials and Copyright Laws

Materials developed using University funds shall belong to the University. Course development paid for by the University shall also belong to the University's Unit. Faculty will ensure compliance with all copyright laws concerning the use and reproduction of printed materials and transmission of films, recording, videotapes or other protected works (See Copyright Compliance: <http://www.jsums.edu/research/policies-and-procedures/>.)

D. Third-Party Providers

Distance learning courses are available from other colleges, universities, corporations or non-profit organizations. In the event that the faculty of Jackson State University wishes to freely adopt, purchase or lease modules or entire courses from a Third Party, such courses or modules must be evaluated by the Curriculum Committee, department chairperson and/or dean to ensure that the materials meet all quality criteria set forth by the University, before any legal agreements are signed between the parties.

E. Academic Integrity of Distance Learning Courses

Distance learning courses are comparable to traditional, campus-based courses in terms of course descriptions, expectations and learning outcomes. It is the responsibility of the faculty to ensure that the rigor and quality of courses and programs are consistent across delivery platforms and that rigor and quality are maintained.

Requirements such as a grading system, examinations, research projects, course evaluation, faculty evaluation, attendance policy, and clock hours required are considered part of academic integrity.

F. University Honesty Policy

University policy states that it is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with the Honor Code and policies concerning academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aiding and abetting dishonesty, collusion, and unauthorized possession or distribution of academic materials. The honor code and University judicial procedures will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

G. Accessibility (Americans with Disabilities Act)

The University makes every effort to select instructional technologies that are accessible to individuals with disabilities. As with traditional, campus-based courses, students taking online courses may request accommodations to meet the individual needs of the learner. In distance learning courses, special arrangements may be made to deliver the course in an alternative format as needed. Students seeking accommodations should be encouraged to contact the JSU Disability Services Office for assistance and the staff persons in that office will notify the instructor. JSU follows the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973 as amended in 1998.

H. Interactive Video Network (IVN) Classrooms

Accessibility of IVN classrooms should be administered by the Online Implementation Team. This includes scheduling, room access, and technical support. Scheduling of IVN classrooms should be available to all disciplines. Finally, DL courses should take precedent over traditional classes that may normally be scheduled in these rooms.

I. Course Offerings

Courses currently offered by the University via Canvas are listed on JSU's Distance Learning web site at: <http://www.jsums.edu/jsuonline>. Jackson State University also advertises all courses each semester both online and in print. The following sections are designated for online, blended, or hybrid courses at Jackson State:

Hybrid Sections: 60-69; 79

Online Sections: 80-89; 70-72

Online Degree Program Course Sections: 100-109

J. Course Review

All courses, traditional and online, will be reviewed by observation or examination by the department chair and/or college dean, to ensure that all criteria are met as set forth in this policy. Periodic reviews of online courses will be conducted electronically by the staff of *JSUOnline*. Results of the reviews are discussed with faculty to ensure that appropriate changes are made to improve the curriculum and/or instructional methods, and content delivery. Ongoing

monitoring of all distance learning courses is the responsibility of the department chairs and deans.

K. Faculty Evaluation

Online instructors are evaluated in the same manner as those who teach traditional courses [i.e. the Student Instruction Rating System (SIRS)]. Student evaluations are completed online in all courses, whether traditional or distance learning. The results of those evaluations are used to guide course revision and are given to the faculty member, appropriate department chairs and deans, the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, and *JSUOnline*. *JSUOnline* reviews the evaluations to identify faculty who may require additional training in course design, instructional methods, and content delivery.

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A. Library Resources

Online or distant students will be provided adequate access to campus library resources via on-line services. Library resources such as on-line catalog and on-line databases, materials placed on reserve at the main campus, e-mail services, and toll-free telephone. Please visit the [JSU Libraries](#) or the [JSU Library Services for Distance Learners](#) web sites for more information.

Distant students may access the University libraries via P.A.W.S and by activating their NetID. Online students should also be informed that ALL JSU library services are available to them, if they choose to visit the campus.

B. University Bookstore

The University Bookstore (www.jsu.bkstr.com) provides information on textbooks associated with each course. All students may make bookstore purchases using the online service or they may elect to acquire books and resources for courses from alternate sources. Undergraduate students may enroll in the included textbook purchasing program.

C. Alice Varnado Harden Center for Service and Community Engaged Learning

The Harden Center supports students, faculty and staff toward a commitment to lifelong citizenship locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The Harden Center assists students in developing the skills necessary to be civically responsible citizens and to take action on social issues that are important to them. For more information:

<http://www.jsu.edu/studentlife/center-for-service-community-engaged-learning/>

Getting involved in civic engagement at Jackson State University is very simple. The Harden Center promotes social action through campus-community partnerships, faculty scholarship and student involvement and provides information on a wide variety of opportunities for community involvement.

D. Career Services Center

Career Services provides a supportive and proactive manner for Jackson State University students and alumni; including information and counseling on career choices, graduate and professional school, co-op and internships and part-time and permanent employment opportunities. The Center also provides effective and efficient services to employers through recruitment programs and activities. For more information: <http://www.jsu.edu/careers>.

E. VeriCite

Jackson State University is committed to helping students uphold the ethical standards of academic integrity in all areas of study. The anti-plagiarism tool, VeriCite is available in all Canvas distance learning courses. All course materials are subject to submission to VeriCite for the purpose of detecting textual similarities. Assignments submitted to VeriCite will be included as source documents in VeriCite's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. VeriCite will be used as a source document to help students avoid plagiarism in written documents. For more information see the [VeriCite](#) web site for video tutorials.

Part 8. Classroom Management

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A. Class Size – Minimum and Maximum

Minimum course capacity in online courses is dictated by University policy. Best practices in online course maximum enrollment recommend a maximum course size of 25 and a minimum class size of 10 students. Department administration, faculty resources, and student demand may require exceptions to the norm.

B. Student Enrollment

All students signing up for a course must first be admitted to Jackson State University. Once admitted, the student must contact the department and advisor to receive a PIN to access “JSU PAWS” (Jackson State University’s Personal Access to Web Services). Students should pre-register each semester at the designated time. PINs are defaulted to the student’s full numerical birthday (e.g. 032193).

It is important that the student select the correct section for the intended course. The following sections are designated for online, blended, or hybrid courses at Jackson State:

Online Sections 80-89; 70-72

Hybrid Sections 60-69; 79

Online Degree Program Course Sections: 100-109

C. Student Orientation Training

Students may register online by logging into the Jackson State University Homepage at: www.jsums.edu. Click on “JSU P.A.W.S” at the top of page. Students will need their J-Number and PIN to proceed.

All students must complete the Canvas Student Online Orientation prior to enrolling in their first online, hybrid, or Canvas-enabled course. Students will be introduced to Canvas components, learn how to submit assignments, take quizzes and exams, view grades, use the discussion board, send emails, and learn other elements that may assist them in completing their online course successfully. Students should visit the *JSUOnline* home page (<http://www.jsums.edu/jsuonline/getting-started-information/>) to register for the Canvas Student Online Orientation.

D. Official E-Mail Address

Jackson State University provides each student with an official email account (J#@students.jsums.edu). All official correspondence will be sent to the University-provided student email account, including course-related emails and campus announcements. All students are required to use and maintain their JSU email account. Personal email accounts (i.e. not a student’s official account) should not be used when contacting JSU faculty or staff, or when submitting coursework.

E. Student Authentication

Faculty members must verify that students participating in online courses are indeed the same as student who officially enrolled in the course. This may be accomplished by requiring students to be physically present when course assessments are done. Faculty members may also require students to go to a pre-approved site for course assessments where an official site representative proctors them. In this instance, the student will be required to produce a student ID.

In accordance with SACS *Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement*, . . .” the institution must demonstrate that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identify of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as (1) a secure

login and pass code, (2) proctored examinations, and (3) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.”

F. Verification of Enrollment

The U. S. Department of Education requires that students complete academic activities before they may be counted in attendance at any time during the semester. The USDE will not accept the simple act of logging into the University’s learning management system (Canvas) as proof of attendance at any time during the semester. Students must complete an academic activity to be counted as attending.

For this reason, faculty members are required to include an academic activity for students to complete early in the semester. Completion of this activity will be used to verify students’ attendance and participation in the course. Faculty members will report student attendance to the Offices of Financial Service and Financial Aid via the attendance software by the published deadline date each term, generally the 10th day (i.e. two business weeks) of the term. At the end of each semester, faculty must report a last date of attendance for any student receiving a “W”, “F” or “I” grade. The last day on which the student completed an academic activity within the course should be used to determine the last day of attendance.

G. Class Attendance

In order to achieve maximum benefit from educational activities, students are expected to attend class regularly. Class attendance is defined as active participation within the online course. Participation includes activities such as submission of assignments, completion of exams, attending online chats, and posting of discussions. Simply logging in to the course is not considered participation.

H. Testing/Assessment

Instructors are expected to design the standards to measure student success in their courses. A variety of measures should be used, such as case studies, essays, research projects, labs, papers, exams, applications, and real world experiences.

Examinations are to be administered as scheduled. The instructor is not obligated to repeat or remind students of examination due dates. It is the students’ responsibility to acquire necessary materials from the course in the learning management system (Canvas Learn). No make-up examinations will be given unless approved by the instructor.

I. Web-based Proctored Exams

JSUOnline provides a Web-based proctoring service in collaboration with a third-party provider, ***Remote Proctor Now***, for distant students taking University-required exams such as the Graduate English Competency Exam (GECE) and the Undergraduate English Proficiency Exam (UEPE) and course or other University-designated exams.

Detailed procedures and the cost of the proctoring service are published on *JSUOnline’s* and the Testing and Assessment department’s websites. The use of this Web-based professional proctoring service requires the student to pay a fee directly to the proctoring service provider.

J. Proctors, Non-Web-based

Individual proctors must be *pre-approved* by the JSU Testing and Assessment department. The *Proctor Identification and Approval Request* form is provided on *JSUOnline’s* and the Testing and Assessment department’s websites.

The following individuals should not be secured to serve as proctors:

- Co-workers
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Relatives

K. Grades

Grading should be directly related to the course objectives. Faculty will keep records of these grades in Canvas and use JSU P.A.W.S. to report the grades following the guidelines in the Jackson State University Faculty Handbook.

L. Office Hours and Student Expectations for Response

Faculty teaching online courses are subject to policies and procedures of the Faculty Handbook and Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) policy related to office/conference hours, vacations, and the like.

The goal of faculty office hours is to facilitate student access to the professor at specified times, to assist students, and to respond to needs, especially learning needs. Faculty must clearly indicate in the course material the expectation for response to student requests, including the frequency of faculty interaction with discussion boards. Faculty members teaching online courses are expected to respond to student emails and questions within 24 hours but not later than 48 hours.

As stated in the JSU Faculty Handbook, faculty members should post and hold office hours in a format suitable to support students in their courses. For online courses, office hours may require the use of the telephone, email, text chat, video chat, or other technologies, as needed to provide adequate support for students unable to come to campus. A faculty member or adjunct instructor may set up to 1 1/2 hours for each distance learning course as virtual (online) office hours per week.

M. Instructor Illness/Absence

If a faculty member must be out of contact for more than 24 hours due to an unexpected reason, such as a short illness or a family emergency, students will be notified by the faculty member through the Announcements area of the online course or via email. The notice will include when the students can expect regular contact for the course to resume.

The faculty member will immediately notify the department chair and the staff of JSUOnline if the illness/emergency is expected to result in a lengthy absence (more than 72 hours). If necessary, the department chair may appoint a trained online instructor to assist students while the absent instructor is unavailable.

N. Dropping and Withdrawing from a Course

Online courses are subject to the same regulations as stated in official University publications (e.g. catalogs, website). Deadlines for dropping and withdrawing from a course are typically printed in the Course Schedule Booklet, University catalogs, and on the JSU website.

O. Course Cancellation

Online courses are subject to the same regulations as stated in the University catalog. Courses will be cancelled only in emergency situations and with ample notice if possible. Otherwise, only technical interruptions will result in class cancellation.

P. Acceptable Use of Computer Technology

Jackson State prohibits the use of University computer technology to engage in activities for the purpose of illegal activities or to promote personal gain and/or profit or use of University technology for organizations other than JSU.

The communication tools provided within an online course are to be used for course-related purposes only. Student should not transmit messages of a romantic or sexual nature to any person or persons. It is also unacceptable to create, display, transmit or make accessible threatening, racist, sexist, offensive, or harassing language and/or material.

Q. Student Help / Support

Jackson State provides online students an electronic message form by which they can report concerns and ask questions about online operations and course-related concerns. The *JSUOnline* and the University's Academic Technology staff will receive the content of the message. If applicable, the staff of those offices will contact the online instructor to discuss the content and follow up with the student that submitted the message.

Students may also phone the Canvas Help Desk for assistance with technology and course-related matters. To obtain assistance with technical issues (removing pop-up blockers, opening pages or quizzes, etc.) or if you are unable to see the course content or have other questions regarding the course tools, please visit the call the Canvas Support Hotline at 1-844-358-8765 or access the online support portal via the Help hyperlink within Canvas Global Navigation Pane.

R. Complaints

Students residing outside the State of Mississippi who desire to resolve a grievance are encouraged to follow the [University's Student Grievance Process](#). The Division of Student Life and the Student Government Association (SGA) serve as mediators between the faculty, administration and the student body and assists with all student activities. Instructions for submitting a grievance can be found in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and *Graduate Catalog*.

If an issue cannot be resolved with the University, a complaint may be filed with the Commission of Colleges Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), <http://www.sacs.org>, or the appropriate state agency for handling complaints in a student's state.

Part 9. State Authorization Requirements for Distance Education

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The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) requires institutions offering distance or correspondence education to acquire authorization from all states from which students are enrolled. This authorization is required to maintain students' eligibility to receive federal financial aid. Jackson State University participates in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), which is a voluntary agreement among its member states and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance-education courses and programs. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. Jackson State University has demonstrated a "good faith" effort to comply with other states' regulations and may choose not to enroll students from states where they are not authorized.

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