

**Distance Education Policy**  
**Loyola University New Orleans College of Law**

**Preamble & Limitations:** As an ABA-accredited law school, the College of Law is subject to the ABA Standards for Approval of Law Schools. In accordance with ABA Standards, Loyola students may not earn more than one third of the credit hours required for the J.D. degree through distance education courses, and they may not earn more than ten credit hours through distance education courses during the first third of their education. At Loyola, 90 credit hours are required to earn the J.D. degree; thus, a student may not earn more than 30 credit hours through distance education courses.

**Purpose:** This policy is designed to guide Loyola University New Orleans College of Law in the development, delivery, and granting of credit for distance education courses in accordance with American Bar Association Standards.

**Definitions:**

a) Distance Education Course. Per ABA definition 7, a “[d]istance education course’ means one in which students are separated from all faculty members for more than one-third of the instruction and the instruction involves the use of technology to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and all faculty members, either synchronously or asynchronously.” A course may be delivered asynchronously, synchronously, or as a hybrid or blended class as defined below.

b) Asynchronous course. An asynchronous course is one in which the instruction is delivered at one time and the students receive that instruction and work can be done at a different time. In asynchronous classes, students and teachers use email, discussion boards, blogs, wikis, videos, and other technologies, which allow them to communicate without having to be in the same virtual or physical space at the same time.

c) Synchronous online course. A synchronous online course is one that requires students and instructors to be online at the same time. Lectures, discussions, and class sessions occur at a specific time. All students must be online at that specific hour in order to participate. There is no time delay, allowing participants to respond in real time.

d) Hybrid course. Hybrid courses (also known as blended courses) include a combination of course delivery methods, which may involve face-to-face meetings in a classroom, asynchronous class sessions, and/or synchronous online class sessions. This Policy applies to those Hybrid courses that fit the definition of Distance Education Course set forth in part (a) above.

**Distance Education Course Requirements:**

a) Courses to be delivered as distance education courses must be approved by the Faculty Curriculum Committee and by the faculty, even if the traditionally taught course is already offered in the regular law school curriculum. Academic content, method of course delivery, methods of evaluating student performance, and methods of ensuring student interaction shall be reviewed as part of the course approval process. Faculty wishing to teach a distance education course must submit a Request for Approval to the Faculty Curriculum Committee. Information about each course taught as a distance education course will be reported on the 310 form submitted by faculty each semester, confirming that the course is being taught as it was proposed and approved.

- b) Syllabi for distance education courses must identify student learning outcomes, including appropriate methods of assessment and evaluation of student progress toward learning outcomes consistent with ABA Standard 302.
- c) Distance education courses must include interactive tools and course design elements that provide the opportunity for regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students and among students that equal or exceed the interaction found in a traditional classroom setting.
- d) Faculty must regularly monitor student effort, provide opportunities for communication, and provide regular and prompt feedback on student effort and performance. Faculty will respond in a timely fashion to student questions and concerns, and will state in the syllabus what their response time is likely to be (e.g., 24 hours). Faculty will alert students in advance if it appears that they will deviate materially from that response time and will alert students as soon as practicable if an emergency situation arose that prevented them from responding in a timely manner.
- e) Distance education courses must be designed to use the technological resources available at the University and the College of Law, supportable by the University and the College of Law, and reasonably available to students. Faculty training and assistance will be provided by the Loyola University Center for Teaching, Research, & Learning and IT Services.
- f) Each course must be hosted on a secure website and have a process for verifying the identity of students registered in the course, including a unique, secure login and password. Distance education courses offered through Canvas shall be presumed to meet this requirement.
- g) Each class must be set up to protect student privacy consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- h) Each required examination for a course that does not permit students to use outside materials must be proctored by assigned personnel or by using available technology. Take-home exams will be processed through the College of Law's Office of Academic Affairs and Student Records to ensure verification of the student's identity and to protect the student's privacy.

**Student Responsibilities:**

- a) Students are expected to know how to manage basic computer issues and to have reliable technologies to fulfill course requirements. An up-to-date PC or Mac-based computer with access to high-speed internet is required. The University "help desk" provides support to students. The University library and the College of Law library have limited numbers of laptop computers and tablets that students may check out for specified intervals of time should a student experience temporary computer issues. Additionally, these libraries have computers for student in-house use in each library.
- b) Students are expected to abide by all instructions and requirements regarding all facets of distance education courses, including class assignments, class attendance, assessments, and testing.
- c) Students are expected to abide by the limitations set by the ABA of no more than 30 credit hours earned through distance education courses out of the 90 credit hours required to graduate and no more than 10 credit hours earned through distance education courses during the first 30 earned credit hours.