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Definition of Distance Learning Programs

Distance learning programs are “non-classroom based” learning programs. In distance learning programs, students work alone, but have access to online, video, and/or print materials. Some distance programs are set up so that students work totally on their own, but there is another type of program known as “hybrid,” meaning, “instruction that mixes face-to-face classroom learning with distance education methods.”

Distance education is a formal learning activity in which students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

Distance learners must be assessed under the same guidelines as all adult learners in the state. All components of the NC CCR Assessment Policy apply to distance education students. Students in distance education must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program before they can be reported to the NRS.
Counting Distance Education Hours

The NRS guidelines state that proxy contact hours must be developed using one of three specified models: clock time, teacher verification or learner mastery. (Proxy hours are hours where exact time spent on various activities cannot be directly verified but are calculated, based on an approved distance education curriculum and a specific model for estimating time.) North Carolina will use all three models, depending upon which curriculum is used. (See attached chart to determine which model is used with each curriculum.)

The clock time model may only be used with curricula that track the time the student interacts with the software and which also contain a mechanism to log students out of the program after a specified period of inactivity. One hour of clock time will be reported as one hour of instructional time.

- The teacher verification model is based on the state assigning a predetermined number of proxy hours for completing activities (such as viewing a videotape and completing workbook lessons). North Carolina will use this model for most curriculum that is not tracked by clock time. If a program selects curriculum which is not counted by clock time, then the program must first pilot the curriculum and conduct research on the hours that it takes students to finish the units, etc. Then the program would apply for permission to the System Office thirty days prior to offering the curriculum. For example, students could keep logs of how long it takes them to complete assignments in a specific curriculum. Once that information is gathered, the program may be able to get an average length of completion time per assignment. The program could then apply to use that curricula, using the average length of time per unit for the contact hours.
Curricula for Clock Time Use

The following software programs have been approved by the System Office for use as Clock Time Distance Ed programs by all basic skills/adult ed programs in NC:

1. Achieve – Spark 3000
2. ACT WorkKeys
3. Apex
4. Aztec
5. Burlington English
6. Common Core Achieve Online
7. Connect Ed
8. Conover Online
9. EdReady/NROC (National Repository of Online Courses)
10. Edgenuity
11. ESL Library
12. Essential Ed
13. Get This Write
14. Gradpoint
15. I-pathways
16. IXL
17. Kahn Academy
18. Learning Upgrade
19. New Reader’s Press Online
20. NorthStar Digital Literacy
21. Odysseyware
22. Paxen Focus
23. Plato/Edmentum
24. Reading Horizons
25. USA Learns

Providers may use software programs not listed here for distance education with prior approval of the System Office. In order to receive approval, the software must have the ability to track time, to produce a detailed time-stamped login/logout report for each student, and to log students out after a maximum of 15 minutes of inactivity.

Please complete and submit The Clock Time Program Approval Application. This form can also be found as a Word document on the NCCC CCR NRS Training Website.
## Distance Learning Clock-Time Course Approval Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of Software:</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of Provider:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date Submitted:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant Name:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant’s Email Address:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant’s phone number:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Give a brief overview/description of the software:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the software have a feature allowing instructors to run time-stamped Student Login/Logout Reports?

Submit an example of the time-stamped Student Login/Logout Report with the application.

After how many minutes of inactivity will the software log off the inactive student? Please also submit documentation of this from the publisher.

Describe the methods which will be used for supporting learners at a distance:
Which NRS assessments will be used and how will they be administered?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Briefly describe student orientation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Briefly describe student recruitment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Mail or Email Report to:
Daniel Loges
Director of Professional Development and Distance Education, CCR
North Carolina Community College System Office
5016 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-5016
Email: logesd@nccommunitycolleges.edu
Alternative Learning Packets via Teacher Verification Model

In order to reach those students who have limited access to online instruction, the Alternative Learning Packet method has been developed via the Teacher Verification Model. Based on the teacher’s recommendation, Alternative Learning Packets can have a value of two, three, four, or five hours per week. Please see the FAQ on page ten for more information on implementation of Alternative Learning Packets.

All Alternative Learning Packets must include the following:

1) NRS LEVEL(s)
2) College and Career Readiness Content Standards alignment
3) Instructional Objectives
4) Teacher facilitated student learning
5) Sufficient activities to meet the learning objectives
6) Informal assessment of mastery of learning objectives

In order to have an Alternative Learning Packet approved, directors should submit the packets along with the Alternative Learning Packet form to Daniel Loges, Director of Professional Development and Distance Education at logesd@nccommunitycolleges.edu. This form can also be found as a Word document on the NCCC CCR NRS Training Website.

Directors are also encouraged to view a very brief video detailing the requirements for an Alternative Learning Packet Submission.
Alternative Learning Packet Approval Request Form

Alternative Learning Packet Approval Request Form

Alternative Learning Packets are an approved distance learning method for students who have limited access to online instruction.

Instructions for completing the form:

Please submit this approval request form as a **WORD document** along with a sample lesson plan per content area for each NRS Level included in the packet. All submissions must come from the program director and must include the following:

NRS LEVEL
College and Career Readiness Content Standards aligned to the indicated NRS level
Instructional Objectives
Sufficient instructional activities to meet the learning objectives
Explicitly explain how the teacher will be facilitating the instructional activities and providing feedback to promote student learning and student-teacher interaction.

If you are submitting a learning packet approval form for a class containing multiple NRS levels and/or content areas, submit a lesson plan for each level and content area. If you are submitting a learning packet approval form for a single NRS level class and content area, submit one lesson plan.

Please follow this link to identify **CCR Content Standards, Learning Objectives, and Instructional Activities** that align to the specified NRS Levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Director:</th>
<th>Date Submitted:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Packet NRS Level:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requested number of Proxy Contact Hours per packet:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Received by System Office:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved By:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Approval:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with the sample lesson plan a narrative must be included that answers the following:

1. How are the learning packets aligned to the CCR content standards?
2. Please list the learning objectives AND CCR content standards.
3. How is the material appropriate for the stated NRS levels?
4. Explain how the packet contains sufficient instructional activities to meet the proxy contact hour award.
5. How will the student have access to faculty for instructional assistance?
6. How will faculty provide feedback for completed packets?
7. Describe the method used for exchanging packets between student and faculty.
8. Describe the process for maintaining documentation of student packets.
9. Describe how you will track the proxy contact hours to report hours for post-testing.

Complete this form and send it along with the sample lesson plan and required narrative to Daniel Loges, Director of Professional Development & Distance Ed at [logesd@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:logesd@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

Alternative Learning Packet approval will require 30 calendar days from date of submission. Once approved this form will be returned to you as a pdf and should be kept with the class file.
Alternative Learning Packet Approval Check List

The System Office will use this checklist to approve or disapprove submitted alternative learning packets.

1. NRS Levels are indicated on the form.

2. CCR Content Standards are aligned to the indicated NRS levels.

3. Contact hours requested match those on lesson plans.

4. NRS Level on request match those on lesson plans.

5. Learning objectives are clearly stated.

6. Learning objectives are aligned to content standards.

7. There is clear evidence of teacher-led instructional activities. (How will the instructor guide the learning?)

8. Packet contains sufficient instructional activities to meet the contact hour award.

9. Material is appropriate for the indicated NRS levels.

10. A sample lesson plan is included for each NRS level and content area.

11. Students have sufficient access to faculty for instructional assistance.

12. There is a clear explanation of how faculty will provide feedback for the completed packets.

13. Process for maintaining documentation of packets is sufficient.

14. There are sufficient Approval Request Forms for the number of packets submitted for approval.
Alternative Learning Packets FAQ

College and Career Readiness
Alternative Learning Packets FAQ
July 21, 2020

Q1: What are Alternative Learning Packets (ALPs)?

Q2: Where can I find the NEW 2020-2021 Alternative Learning Packet Form?
A2: The Word version of the Alternative Learning Packet Form is located on the CCR NRS Assessment Training Website under “Important Documents.”

Q3: How long will it take for my ALP to be approved?
A3: Expect the approval process to take 30 days from the date of your submission.

Q4: Do I need to resubmit ALPs that were approved during program year 2019-2020?
A4: No

Q5: What is the hour value of each Alternative Learning Packet?
A5: Each ALP can have an hour value of two, three, four, or five hours per packet.

Q6: Can Alternative Learning Packets be used as part of a traditional class?
A6: Yes

Q7: Can participants studying via ALPS also attend face-to-face and/or online classes?
A7: Yes

Q8: Can HSE in the Community be used as an Alternative Learning Packet?
A8: HSE in the Community is NOT an ALP. HSE in the Community is a fully approved curriculum created by Alamance Community College. Please do not submit an approval form for HSE in the Community.

Q9: How do I learn more about HSE in the Community?
A9: Alamance Community College has made all of the HSE in the Community materials including an Implementation Guide available through these links:

- All HSE in the Community Lessons
- Answer Keys for Booklets 1 – 5
- Answer Keys for Booklets 6 -10
- Implementation Guide
- HSE in the Community Webinar Slides
Proxy hours may also be used for selected curricula in North Carolina. The following chart lists the proxy hours for materials to be used in North Carolina. (Note: If your program wants to use materials that are not on this chart or that use clock-time plus workbook/other activities, then you must conduct a pilot for determining proxy hours. See “How to Pilot a Distance Course to Determine Proxy Hours.”)

**Curricula for Mastery & Teacher Verification Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Criteria for Awarding Proxy Contact Hours</th>
<th>Proxy Contact Hours Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads Café</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>Passed unit test @ ≥70%</td>
<td>10 hours per unit; total possible PCH = 260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSE in the Community</td>
<td>Teacher Verification</td>
<td>Successful Completion of Unit @ ≥ 70%</td>
<td>8 hours per unit. Total possible PCH = 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED Connection</td>
<td>Teacher Verification</td>
<td>Video: student self-report to teacher &lt;br&gt;Workbook: teacher determines % of work completed &lt;br&gt;Internet Activities: teacher determines work completed &lt;br&gt;Internet Module: teacher validates w/questioning whether student has engaged &lt;br&gt;Practice Tests: online and print based</td>
<td>Video: .5 hours &lt;br&gt;Workbook: ≥75% of activities completed = 4 hours; 50-74% = 2 hours &lt;br&gt;Internet Activities: 1 hr per activity; total possible PCH = 43 &lt;br&gt;Modules: 3 hours per module; total possible PCH = 15 &lt;br&gt;Tests: 1 hr per; total possible PCH = 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEDi (GED Illinois)</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>Passed unit test</td>
<td>50 minutes per unit completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Essential Skills**</td>
<td>Teacher Verification</td>
<td>Video: student self-report to teacher &lt;br&gt;Workbook: teacher determines % of work completed &lt;br&gt;Internet Activities: teacher determines % of work completed &lt;br&gt;Preview and Review Tests: print based</td>
<td>Video: .5 hours &lt;br&gt;Workbook: ≥75% of activities completed = 2 hours; 50-74% = 1 hour; total possible PCH = 48 &lt;br&gt;Internet Activities: ≥75% of activities completed = 2.5 hours; 50-74% = 1.5 hours; total possible PCH = 60 &lt;br&gt;Tests: 1 hr per; total PCH possible = 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Piloting a Distance Ed Course to Determine Proxy Hours

Providers that would like to use curriculum which are not on the above chart or that use clock-time plus workbook/other activities, must conduct a Proxy Hour Study. Once the type of distance education curricula is selected, program staff should conduct a pilot project using the curricula to determine how many proxy hours should be counted. One way to determine contact hours is to have students keep a log of the time that students work on each activity, then get an average per all students who worked on the activity. While the study is being conducted, providers will not count contact hours for the students involved in the study. After the study is conducted, providers must submit a “Distance Learning Proxy Hour Study Report” to Dan Loges for approval. Final approval will include the number of contact hours to be awarded per unit.

Upon receipt of the proxy hour study at the NCCC System Office, the Proxy Hour Committee will review the study and respond to the initiating provider within 90 days from the date of the submission.
Essential Elements of a Proxy Hour Study

A study provides a research basis for assigning proxy contact hours. Here are the basic steps required to conduct a proxy hour study.

1. Contact Dan Loges before beginning a proxy hour study.
2. The study must involve two groups of students. Each group must have a minimum of ten student participants who complete the study.
3. The first group will be doing the proposed distance education curriculum from home by themselves.
4. The second group will be doing the proposed curriculum in a seated class. The classroom teacher will track how long they spend teaching the curriculum content in the classroom, on a unit by unit basis. The classroom teacher will need to keep and submit time records for each lesson/unit.
5. Students in the group working from home are required to keep a record of the times that they spend working on each lesson/unit.
6. All student and teacher time records must be submitted as part of the proxy hour study. Programs have the flexibility to create time records that best meet their needs for the proxy hour study that is being conducted. However, time records must be used. Below is an example of the type of time record that could be used for a proxy hour study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSON</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>BEG TIME</th>
<th>END TIME</th>
<th>TOTAL TIME WORKED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EX: LESSON 1</td>
<td>07/21/19</td>
<td>6:23 pm</td>
<td>8:23 pm</td>
<td>2 Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Each activity and/or lesson must be aligned to the NC Adult Education Content Standards. The content standards must be cited for each activity/lesson.
8. After the first group has completed each lesson, average the time reported for each lesson.
9. Compare the average time reported for each lesson done at home with the time reported by the classroom teacher.’
10. Submit for approval the number of proxy hours you recommend for each lesson based on your findings from the comparison of the work done at home and the work done in the seated classroom.
Submitting the Proxy Hour Study to the System Office

Submit a Proxy Hour Study Report which includes the following:

1) Name of provider that conducted the proxy hour study.
2) Date of submission.
3) Names of all staff members involved in the proxy hour study.
4) Dates that the proxy hour study was conducted.
5) Name of the proposed course.
6) Brief overview of the course including materials, products, and curriculum to be used.
7) Describe the process that will be implemented for the delivery and exchange of the distance ed course.
8) Requested number of proxy hours for each lesson/unit.
9) Rationale for requested number of proxy hours.
10) All time records on which the number of proxy hours requested is based.
11) All of the actual lessons students will be studying along with the NC Adult Ed Content Standards citations.
12) Describe the methods that will be used for supporting learners at a distance.
13) Describe how students will be recruited for this distance ed course.
14) Explain the orientation process for students recruited for this course.
15) Describe which NRS assessments will be used, and how will they be administered.

Mail or email the final report to:

Daniel Loges
Director of Professional Development and Distance Education, CCR
North Carolina Community College System Office
5016 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-5016
Email: logesd@nccommunitycolleges.edu
Basic Skills courses can be taught via any LMS that offers a built-in student activity time feature and/or can produce time-stamped student login-logout reports. Learning Management Systems and Web Conferencing Apps do not need to be submitted for approval.

Below is a list of some of the LMS and Web Conferencing Apps that may be used to teach Synchronous Distance Ed Classes. This list is not all inclusive.

1. Adobe Connect
2. Blackboard
3. Blackboard Collaborate
4. Canvas
5. Collaborate Ultra
6. Google Hangouts
7. Google Meets
8. Moodle
9. MS Teams
10. WebEx
11. Zoom