



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY TITLE:

KYSU Online Course Modality Policy

VOLUME, SECTION & NUMBER:

1.3.14

ENTITIES AFFECTED:

Students

Faculty

ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY:

Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Office of Online Education

Registrar's Office

APPROVED BY:

The Office of Online Education

The Kentucky State University Board of Regents

EFFECTIVE DATE:

7/1/2024

REVISED FROM:

Section 3.3 of the Kentucky State University Faculty Handbook (August 27, 2019 revision)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the KYSU Online Course Modality Policy is to clarify the course modalities of academic programs and courses offered by Kentucky State University. The launch of KYSU Online in the 2024-25 academic year requires a new policy to standardize the terminology, definitions, and processes of course modalities. This policy updates the course modality definitions found in the 2019 edition of the Faculty Handbook, and it differentiates online courses and virtual courses to support the distinct academic offerings of KYSU Online.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The academic programs of Kentucky State University are oriented toward two general venues. One venue is the physical campus of Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky. This is the locus of the traditional academic programs, the full-time faculty, and the administrative offices of the University's programs. This venue primarily serves residential and commuter students enrolled in traditional degree programs. The



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

courses in these degree programs are offered on-campus, virtually, or in a hybrid modality. Aside from rarely approved exceptions, these modalities are synchronous, requiring students to attend scheduled class meetings.

The other venue is KYSU Online. Beginning in the 2024-25 academic year, KYSU Online is the venue for distance learning degree programs and a remote student population. This venue offers courses in the online modality, which this policy distinguishes from traditional, virtual, and hybrid course modalities. The online modality is asynchronous, apart from rarely approved exceptions, and online courses do not require any meetings on the residential campus.

Residential Academic Programs and Course Modalities:

The residential programs are delivered primarily by full-time faculty on the main campus of Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky. Full-time faculty must fulfill their contracted teaching obligations with courses offered in the residential modalities (i.e., traditional, hybrid, and virtual as defined below) apart from rare exceptions pre-approved by the Provost. Students enrolled in residential programs live on campus in the dormitories or off campus as commuter students. Courses in the residential programs are delivered in three modalities, defined in the following.

Traditional courses:

Courses in the traditional modality meet regularly at a particular meeting time and location. This includes lecture, laboratory, seminar, performance, and studio courses with regular face-to-face meetings each week. Those meetings are the primary method of delivering course content and assessing student learning. The number of face-to-face meetings is based upon course credit hours. Traditional courses may be supplemented by announcements, notes, or assignments distributed through a learning management system like Blackboard or Canvas. Some courses may require at least one assessment given on campus or at an approved testing location; students will be notified of this requirement on the syllabus. Traditional courses are also referred to as “residential courses,” “on-campus courses,” or “face-to-face courses.” Traditional course sections will include a section number without prefixed letters (Examples: 01, 02, 03, etc.).

Hybrid courses:

Courses in the hybrid modality meet a reduced number of times at a particular time and location during the semester compared to traditional classes. The number of face-to-face meetings may vary according to the number of credit hours, course design, and objectives, but hybrid courses will require at least the following number of on-campus meetings for the semester:

- [3] three sessions if the course is offered one day a week,
- [6] six sessions if the course is offered twice weekly or
- [9] nine sessions if the course is offered three times weekly.

The number of meetings, their days, and times should be published on WIRED/Banner or any other appropriate course registration system used by the University before the semester starts. Face-to-face meetings for hybrid courses may include, but are not limited to, presentations, performance-based assessments, discussion sessions, individual or group meetings with the instructor, or examinations. Sixty percent (60%) to eighty percent (80%) of the course content will be distributed through an online



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

learning management system like Blackboard or Canvas. Email may also be used only as a supplement to communication, not instruction. Hybrid courses are also known as “blended courses.”

Hybrid courses should be designated on the course schedule with an “H” prefixed to the section number (Example: H01).

Virtual courses:

Courses in the virtual modality have no face-to-face meetings, but they are offered in the residential degree programs. The entire delivery of course content and assessment of student learning is distributed through a learning management system, such as Blackboard or Canvas. However, virtual courses require synchronous class meetings. Instructors of virtual courses should set aside time to communicate with students via discussion boards, email, Teams, Zoom, or some other method. Virtual courses should be designated on the course schedule with a “V” prefixed to the section number (Example: V01).

Before the launch of KYSU Online in the 2023-24 academic year, virtual courses were synonymously called “online courses.” However, based on this policy and beginning in the 2024-25 academic year course listings, “virtual courses” are distinct from “online courses,” as explained below.

KYSU Online Academic Programs and Course Modalities:

KYSU Online offers distance learning programs, also called online programs, delivered primarily by online faculty not necessarily located on the campus of Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky. Students enrolled in online programs do not live in the dormitories on campus. Likewise, they are not considered commuter students, which presupposes a location near the campus in Frankfort, Kentucky. Courses in the online programs are delivered in the online modality, which is distinct from the virtual modality.

Online courses:

Online courses are offered entirely (100%) through the learning management system (LMS) and do not require students to travel to specific locations. KYSU Online courses are asynchronous, so the courses do not require students to participate remotely in learning activities at specified times, apart from rarely approved exceptions. This asynchronous aspect of the online modality accommodates the needs of online students and their general preference for flexibility. Asynchronous requirements further support the ability of students in various time zones to engage academically with the course material. This fully asynchronous aspect of the online modality differs from the delivery of a virtual course, which requires synchronous elements and serves different student populations.

All course materials are housed within the course pages of the LMS. Textbooks are integrated directly into the LMS as well. Students submit their assignments for grading through the LMS. Faculty instructors also grade assignments and provide substantive feedback to students in the LMS. Although the LMS has messaging features, faculty and students may communicate through email and Microsoft Teams using their official KYSU accounts.

Since online courses are asynchronous, the course content is developed by a faculty Subject Matter Expert (SME), often in consultation with an Instructional Designer (ID). Individual sections of the course are consistent even when a faculty member other than the SME serves as the instructor of record.

Online courses are designated in university systems and literature with the letter “A,” “B,” or “C” prefixed to the course section number. These letters refer to the online academic calendar’s online



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

terms or subterms. Course sections will include an “A, B, or C” prefixed to the course section number (Examples: A01, B01, or C01).

Distinguishing features of each course modality:

Modalities	Section Prefix	Other name	% face-to-face	LMS use
<i>Traditional Course</i>	no prefix used	on-campus; residential	100	supplemental for the purpose of distributing announcements, notes, assignments, syllabus, posting feedback and grades.
<i>Hybrid Course</i>	H	blended	varies	60% - 80% of the course content will be distributed through the LMS
<i>Virtual Course</i>	V	virtual	0	all course content and assessment is distributed through the LMS; synchronous requirements; residential programs.
<i>Online Course</i>	A, B, or C	online; distance	0	all course content and assessment is distributed through the LMS; asynchronous; online programs.

Course Modality Requirements in the Residential Programs:

The full-time faculty of Kentucky State University are contracted to deliver the residential academic programs. The traditional modality is the default modality of courses.

Faculty may choose to offer a course in the hybrid modality with the approval of the Office of Online Education. The request must explain the selection of the hybrid modality within the context of the course objectives and the faculty member’s workload. The request should also apprise the Director of Online Education of how the course will use the LMS and the blend of synchronous and asynchronous academic engagement.

If a course in the residential programs cannot be offered in a traditional or hybrid modality, faculty members must request approval from the Office of Online Education and the Provost to provide a course in the virtual modality. The request must include a rationale for the request and an estimation of the course enrollment. It must explain why the other residential modalities are not viable options within the context of the course objectives and the faculty member’s workload. The request must describe how the course will use the LMS and the blend of synchronous and asynchronous academic engagement. The Office of Online Education should review the request and comment on whether it is justified and does not conflict with the objectives of the department, the academic program, or the students’ best interests. The Office of Online Education will also comment on the faculty member’s completion of training and requirements to offer a virtual course. Courses denied for the virtual modality must be offered in the traditional or hybrid modalities. Alternatively, if the enrollment in the proposed course is relatively low, the Office of Online Education may consider solutions involving sections offered in KYSU Online.

Course Modality Requirements in the programs of KYSU Online:

The online modality is the default modality of KYSU Online’s academic programs. The online modality is asynchronous. Subject Matter Experts and Instructional Designers should design the courses to include asynchronous instruction and academic engagement. Instructors in online courses may offer synchronous learning opportunities for their students, but these may not be required.

Exceptions to the asynchronous requirements of courses must be formally requested from the Office of Online Education at the outset of the course development process. The request should explain why the asynchronous



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

modality is insufficient for the course contents in view, and it should describe why the proposed synchronous course contents must be required rather than supplemental/optional course content. The Office of Online Education will review the request and consult with the Online Advisory Committee as needed. Consideration will be given to the request's impact on students' educational experience, the delivery of learning outcomes, and the logistics of the proposed synchronous requirements. This process is an internal control to prevent differences between advertised and actual requirements. The Office of Online Education will comment on whether the exception is justified and does not conflict with the objectives of the KYSU Online programs and program marketing. If the request involves courses or Instructional Designers contracted for third-party development, the Office of Online Education must consider the contracted work scope when evaluating the SME's requested exception. The Office of Online Education will approve or deny the SME's request.

RELATED PROCEDURES:

Course Scheduling

Listing Courses

Course Registration Process

DEFINITIONS:

Residential Program: See the Policy Statement section above.

Traditional Course: See the Policy Statement section above.

Hybrid Course: See the Policy Statement section above.

Virtual Course: See the Policy Statement section above.

Online Program: See the Policy Statement section above. See also the Institutional Data Dictionary, which defines an online program as “[a]n academic degree program that can be earned primarily or entirely through the use of an Internet-connected computer, rather than attending college in a traditional campus setting.”

Online Course: See the Policy Statement section above. See also the Institutional Data Dictionary, which defines an online course as “[a] course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.”

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS:

1.2.17 Online Learning

STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REFERENCES:

34 CFR 600.2 “Distance education”

34 CFR 600.2 “Educational program”

34 CFR 600.2 “Main campus”

POLICY OWNER/INTERPRETING AUTHORITY:

The Office of Online Education



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

DOCUMENT DATE AND VERSION:

5/25/2024 – 2024.05.25_KYSU_Online Course Modality Policy_v4.docx