



Inter-American University of Puerto Rico
Vice Presidency of Academic and Student Affairs
Associate Vice Presidency of Online Education

Procedure for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses

Purpose

The *Procedure for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses* describes the processes adopted institutionally to ensure consistency and quality in the design, evaluation, and review of distance courses. This document operationalizes the guidelines described in the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*. The creation, certification, and review processes of distance courses must be governed exclusively by the guidelines outlined in this procedure.

Responsibilities

Distance course design is a collaborative and iterative process that involves several actors. If an academic unit does not have qualified personnel for any process stages, it may resort to the Associate Vice Presidency of Online Education for assistance. The people who should participate and the responsibilities with their descriptions are listed below:

1. **Distance Education Officer.** Person in charge or responsible for the operation of Distance Education in the academic unit.

Before beginning a design project, the officer should orient designers and evaluators on the established processes and criteria for designing distance courses. He should:

- Verify that the specialists in the subject matter recommended for designing distance courses comply with the requirements established.
- Provide the specialist designers with the corresponding institutional templates and information documents.

[Type here]

[Type here]

- Ensure compliance with the institutional processes for the design of distance courses.
- Coordinate the secure storage of course contents in editable formats.
- Certify the course using the corresponding form when it complies with the established procedure.
- Send to the Associate Vice Presidency of Online Education a copy of the certifications of the distance courses designed in your academic unit.

2. **Academic Director** Person in charge of directing the department of the course to be designed. The director should:

- Recommend qualified subject matter specialists to design distance courses, ensuring they meet the requirements.
- Recommend qualified subject matter specialists to evaluate the course content in design.
- Provide designers and evaluators orientation on the course design's requirements, approaches, and disciplinary approaches.
- Provide the specialists in the field with a copy of the course's official design record.

3. **Technology Specialist.** The person who manages the technological learning platform adopted by the institution or with vast knowledge in its management. The specialist should:

- Guide designers and evaluators on the available tools of the educational platform.
- Assemble the course content designed for the final certification.
- Certify compliance with section 5 of the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*.
- Create or will request the creation of a master copy of the course designed, as applicable, using the established procedure.

4. **Instructional Designer.** Specialist in instructional design, pedagogy, or curriculum development.

The instructional designer should:

- Guide the designer specialist on the criteria of the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*, as well as on aspects of instructional design of distance courses (ARD model, teaching strategies, and learning evaluation, among other aspects).
 - Provide support to the designer specialist, through training and mentoring, in designing the distance course.
 - Evaluate and certify the course's instructional design using the criteria set forth in the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*.
5. **Designer Specialist.** Subject matter expert who will design the course.
- The designer specialist should:
- Comply with the criteria established in the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses* and the time frames based on the academic unit for the content delivery.
 - Take into account the instructional designer's recommendations.
 - Take into account the recommendations of the evaluating specialist.
 - Comply with copyright laws.
 - Comply with accessibility considerations for distance course content.
 - Deliver content in editable formats.
6. **Evaluation Specialist.** Persona especialista en la materia que evaluará el contenido del curso desde una perspectiva disciplinaria.
- Evaluate and certify the content of the course using the criteria established in the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*.

Procedure

1. Delivery, evaluation, and review of the contents

The contents will be delivered as follows: delivery of the first module, delivery of 50% of the course, and delivery of 100% of the course. Each revision suggested by the instructional designer should be reflected in the next installment, according to each stage. The recommendations made on

[Type here]

[Type here]

the evaluation of the content and on the technological requirements will be communicated to the designer specialist for the corresponding action. The designer specialist must work on the recommendations and information he has incorporated or attended. The process will continue once criteria compliance is verified. All content must be delivered in editable formats.

2. Disciplinary evaluation of course design

Once the instructional designer certifies compliance with all the criteria of the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*, he will refer the content to the academic director of the course under design. These, in turn, will direct the content to the evaluator specialist, who will make a second evaluation of the course to ensure accuracy, equity, adequacy, and the plurality of voices in the disciplinary aspect. The evaluator specialist communicates the recommendation of the content evaluation to the designer specialist for the corresponding action. The designer specialist must work on these recommendations and notify that he has incorporated or attended to them. The process will continue once compliance with all the criteria is verified.

3. Assembly of the course in the educational platform and creation of the master course

Once the evaluating specialist certifies compliance with all the criteria of the *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*, the academic director of the course under design will refer the content to the technological specialist for assembly and verification of compliance with section 5 of said document. Upon completion of the process, the technological specialist requests the designer specialist to verify if the course and all its elements are correctly uploaded on the platform. If there are no changes, he will proceed to create a master copy of the course or request its creation, as appropriate. Distance courses can only be mounted on technological platforms authorized by the UIPR.

4. Delivery of final content and certification of compliance

Once the evaluating specialist certifies compliance with all the criteria *of the Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses*, the academic director of the course under design will refer the content to the technological specialist for assembly and verification of compliance with section 5 of said document. Once the process is completed, the technological specialist requests the designer specialist to verify and certify that the course and all its elements were uploaded correctly on the platform. If there are no changes, he proceeds to create a master copy of the course or request its creation, as appropriate. Distance courses can only be mounted on technological platforms authorized by the UIPR.

5. Delivery of final content and certification of compliance

To complete the design process, the specialist designer must provide a copy of all course content in editable formats. In addition, you must submit signed *Certification of Compliance with Accessibility Aspects* and *Certification of Compliance with Copyright Laws*. The academic director of the course under design will include these documents in the course file (see *Approval*) and will refer the Distance Education manager for the official certification of the course, through the *Distance Course Design Certification document*.

Note: For blended courses, a work plan for the course and the content corresponding to the virtual component.

Approval

The *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses* will be used for the evaluation of instructional design and the evaluation of the content. The document must be completed and signed by each evaluator before being referred for certification. The person in charge of Distance Education will record both evaluations through the *Distance Course Design Certification*. This certification informs the relevant authorities of the availability of the course to be inventoried and programmed as a distance

[Type here]

[Type here]

course. The academic unit will maintain a record for each distance course in the inventory that has been designed in it. The following documents shall form part of the file:

- The *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses* was completed and signed by the instructional designer.
- The *Evaluation Document for the Creation and Review of Distance Courses* was completed and signed by the evaluating specialist.
- The *Certification of Compliance with Accessibility Aspects* signed by the designer specialist.
- The *Certification of Compliance with Copyright Laws* signed by the designer specialist.
- The *Distance Course Design Certification*.
- Evidence of content authenticity assessment (Example: Safe Assign Report, Turnitin, etc.).

The academic unit will send a copy of the *Distance Course Design Certification* to the Associate Vice Presidency of Online Education (VAEL) at the Central System Office (OCS). In addition, you will add the certified course information to the Online Course Inventory System (SICeL, Spanish acronym).

Updating distance courses

Under the coordination of the deans of academic affairs and those in charge of Distance Education, the academic units will elaborate a plan for evaluating and updating the certified distance courses. The plan should take into consideration curricular revisions of academic programs, as well as new developments in disciplines. Courses scheduled for updating must follow the procedure described in this document. It will be the responsibility of the deans of academic affairs and those in charge of Distance Education to keep the documentation that evidences the review of the courses and include the information in SICeL, following the plan previously prepared.