Guidelines for Online Courses

POLICY

The University of Miami welcomes the development and provision of courses offered primarily by electronic means. An online course is defined as one for which the majority of regularly scheduled classroom time is replaced by required activities completed at a distance and managed online. All online courses at the University of Miami must meet the same rigorous standards as courses offered through traditional means.

The University of Miami is committed to providing security for delivery of its online courses, so as to prevent unauthorized data access and to ensure the integrity and appropriate use of information. Security and control measures are the responsibility of the Vice President for Information Technology. Students agree to abide by the University's Acceptable Use Policy. Online courses must adhere to University procedures for protecting the privacy of students enrolled. This includes maintaining strict confidentiality and security of records in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other federal or state laws pertaining to the security and privacy of records. University of Miami employees, including faculty and staff, are provided access to confidential records only on a need-to-know basis or in order to do a specific job for an authorized user. All personnel having access should make reasonable efforts to secure confidential information to the proper extent in keeping with the University's Identity Theft and Red Flag Policy.

Oversight of policies and procedures relating to distance education is assigned to the Associate Provost for University Accreditation in keeping with the University of Miami's protocol for reviewing and approving academic programs or substantive changes.

PROCEDURES

These guidelines should be followed when developing, revising, and delivering any University of Miami (UM) courses by electronic means.

- New courses to be offered online should be subject to the same approval processes as other courses. It should be left up to individual departments, programs, and colleges by what mechanism courses gain their approval for online delivery. However, this process should not differ from the established process for course approval.
- Online courses must maintain the same intellectual, ethical and honor code standards as any UM course, adhere to established student learning outcomes, and be supervised and assessed by the department/program scheduling the course.
- Students taking online courses must be given access to library and other learning/information resources.
- Students taking online courses must have access to appropriate student support programs and services, including accommodations for disability.
- Procedures must be published for addressing written student complaints.

- Current rules regarding number of hours of credit that a student can take in an academic term should apply to online courses as well. That is, these courses will count in the student's course load.
- Online courses must be administered consistently with standards of notification, prerequisites, and requirements that apply to all UM courses.
- Online courses must have an official instructor of record, just as any other course offered.
- Limitations regarding who may enroll in a course in a given term should be published in the same fashion as the availability of that course is publicized. The fact that the delivery system for a course is online should also be indicated.
- Students who register for an online course, who are not otherwise regularly enrolled as a UM student, must reside in a State, U.S. territory, or country that does not restrict enrollment in the UM distance education course.
- Online courses will be identified in the same manner as all other courses on UM transcripts.
- Transfer of credit for online courses will be accepted subject to the limits of UM's established standards on the transfer of academic credit.
- The identity of a student who participates in and receives credit for an online course must be verified by using 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.
- Any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity (e.g., arranging proctored examinations) will be published.