

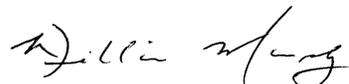


THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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March 8, 2021

To: Presidents/CEOs of NYS Colleges and Universities
From: William P. Murphy 
Subject: Extension of Distance Education Flexibility for the 2021-2022 Academic Year

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the NYS Education Department is extending the current distance education flexibility until the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. This extension permits institutions to continue to offer distance education courses in programs, during the 2021-2022 academic year, without triggering the need to register the programs in the distance education format, even if the 50% threshold for registration in the distance education format will be reached. As the end of the 2021-2022 academic year approaches, we will make a determination concerning the extension or revision of this flexibility policy, depending upon the status of the pandemic at that time.

Institutions are reminded that, regardless of delivery modalities or formats, all academic programs offered by NYS degree granting institutions are required to meet all NYS program registration standards, including all regulatory requirements related to clinical and other experiential and laboratory program components. Offering clinical courses in a licensure-qualifying program in an alternative format requires prior approval. Institutions are further reminded of the necessity to continue to comply with all requirements, including but not limited to those concerning the offering of programs via distance education, established by their accrediting agencies, the U.S. Department of Education, and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) for postsecondary distance education.

NYSED is finalizing an expedited application for the addition of the distance education format to new and existing registered programs. We will inform institutions when the application has been posted on the Department's website. In the interim, please use the existing program change application forms on our website at: (<http://www.nysed.gov/college-university-evaluation/register-or-change-program>).

Questions related to programs that lead to professional licensure should be directed to: opprogs@nysed.gov

Questions related to all other programs, including those that lead to certification should be directed to: ocueinfo@nysed.gov

SUNY institutions refer to <https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/app/forms/> for program proposal forms or contact program.review@suny.edu for inquiries.