

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

Digital Teaching and Learning
July 2020

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Purpose of Shaw University's Distance Education Policy

- I. The Office of Digital Teaching and Learning (DTL) manages the Distance Education Policy for Shaw University

Overview

Shaw University exists to advance knowledge, facilitate student learning and achievement, enhance the spiritual and ethical values of its students, and to transform a diverse community of learners into future global leaders. We are committed to enhancing and improving distance education at Shaw University by providing quality training and support to faculty and students. Shaw University is proactive and committed to ensuring online course integrity.

Mission

The mission of Shaw University's Office of Digital Teaching and Learning (DTL) is to advance knowledge and skills through the employment of digital teaching and learning, to facilitate future-ready student learning and achievement, and to leverage digital resources in order to transform a diverse community of learners into Global leaders.

Objectives

In order to meet the increasing demand for distance education courses, it is critical that Shaw University educate and support faculty and students in developing, teaching, and taking courses via one of the distance education formats. This training and support will enable faculty members to effectively integrate and implement new technologies into their courses to enhance their technological and pedagogical skills. Students will develop skills in order to be effective learners in distance education formats and to achieve learning outcomes. DTL supports Shaw University's goal to increase student enrollment, retention, and satisfaction in distance education courses, ensure distance education integrity, as well as provide education access.

- II. The University recognizes the advantages of providing learning opportunities that are not restricted by time, place, or method of delivery and that all approaches to instruction meet the same high-quality standards that exist for traditional classroom-bound education. In an effort to meet and ensure that these standards exist in distance education at Shaw University, the distance education policy serves as a guide:
 1. For developing and implementing distance education.
 2. In communicating quality standards for the delivery and assessment of distance education. All courses whether offered face to face or via distance education follow the same university policies and procedures.

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Shaw University operates in compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), Public Law 110-315 concerning the verification of student identity in distance learning.

All credit-bearing courses and programs offered through distance learning methods must verify that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. One or more of the following methods must be used:

- A. A secure login and pass code;
- B. Proctored examinations; and/or
- C. New or emerging technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

All methods of verifying student identity in distance learning must protect the privacy of student information. The University reserves the right, with the approval of the appropriate authorization, to change tuition and/or fees at any time.

Each Shaw University student is assigned a unique username and password to log into the University's learning management system (currently Moodle). Students are responsible for providing their complete and true identity information in any identification verification process. Each distance education course is designed to have an introduction video or forum assignment during the first week of the course. Using the LMS secure login system and incorporating best practices for regular effective contact — such as getting to know students and their writing styles — are effective means to help to ensure that students registered for the course are truly the participating student contributing to the course.

To further ensure student privacy in distance education courses, the instructors:

- use only the approved LMS with secure authentication for access;
- use only the gradebook in our LMS, which prohibits others from viewing student grades;
- encourage students to not share their login credentials with others; and
- abstain from discussing/publicizing students' grades, demographic, and other private information.

Personal identifiable information collected by the University may be used at the discretion of the institution as the basis for identity verification. For instance, a student requesting that their learning system password be reset may be asked to provide two or more pieces of information for comparison with data on file or to come to the IT Support in person with a photo ID or verification.

To prevent the loss of student coursework, the instructors are encouraged to back up their courses in the LMS.

Compliance Statement

Faculty should be aware that the same policies which apply to overall university usage of the computer network also apply to the delivery of distance education courses. Special permission is required for distance education courses that place special demands on the institution's computer network infrastructure. The request for permission of this kind should be included with the original proposal submitted for approval to teach a distance education course. If a request for special permission was not included in the original proposal and the course has already been approved, an additional request for special permission should be submitted as soon as possible to the Office of Digital Teaching and Learning.

Agreement to the Policy

Using or attempting to use any computer or information technology resource of Shaw University signifies the following:

1. The user agrees to comply with the provisions of this Acceptable Use Policy.
2. The user accepts responsibility for knowing the contents of this policy statement. Failure to read or acknowledge this statement will not be an excuse for noncompliance.
3. The user accepts that failure to comply with this policy may result in temporary or permanent denial of access to computer or information technologies or in some cases may result in college disciplinary action or legal action.

Definitions

Collective Work. Work such as a periodical issue, anthology, or encyclopedia, in which a number of contributions, constituting separate and independent works in themselves, are assembled into a collective whole. (17 U.S.C. § 101).

Compilation. A work formed by the collection and assembling of preexisting materials or of data that are selected, coordinated, or arranged in such a way that the resulting work as a whole constitutes an original work of authorship. The term "compilation" includes collective works. (17 U.S.C. § 101).

Copyright. Under Federal law, copyright applies to any "original work of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression." (17 U.S.C. § 102(a)). Generally, the owner of a copyright has the exclusive rights to reproduce the work, to prepare derivative works, to distribute copies by sale or other transfer of ownership, and to publicly display or perform the work. (17 U.S.C. § 106).

Distance Education describes a multimedia method of instructional delivery that can include a mix of online (web-based) instruction, streaming video conferencing, face-to-face classroom time, television, telephone, radio, computers or interactive video, or other combinations of electronic and traditional educational models using present and future/or electronic and telecommunication technology.

Distance education can be executed in a variety of ways and is consistent in that there is some degree of physical separation of the teacher and the learners. Communication, instruction, and assessment takes place through or is supported by technological means with focus on student-to-student, student-to-content, and instructor-to-student interaction.

The term "distance education" encompasses the terms "distance learning," "online learning," "e-learning," "hybrid learning," "blended learning," "digital learning," and other similar terminology.

Distance Education Asynchronous Learning (DEAL). An online certification course utilized to train faculty members on the protocol necessary to teach hybrid and online courses according to Quality Matters and Online Learning Consortium standards.

Educational Technology Committee (ETC). A core group of University faculty, staff, and administrators working to ensure the integrity, rigor, and equality in all courses utilizing online, hybrid, and video-teleconference learning environments.

Face-to-Face Course. A course or internship in which students and instructors meet in person on our main and CAPE campuses.

Fair Use. The Copyright Act provides for some exceptions to the exclusive rights of the copyright owners. One of these exceptions permits fair use of a copyrighted work for purposes such as teaching, scholarship, or research. (17 U.S.C. § 107). The four factors to be considered in determining fair use are:

Hybrid Course. A course in which a portion of the weekly contact hours (less than 49%) are delivered via the Internet and a majority of the weekly contact hours (49% or more) are delivered face to face.

Instructors. Faculty members with subject matter expertise who have completed appropriate DEAL training courses in preparation for teaching students enrolled in online, hybrid, and/or VTC courses.

Joint Work. A work prepared by two or more authors with the intention that their contributions be merged into inseparable or interdependent parts of a unitary whole. (17 U.S.C. §101).

Learning Management System (LMS). A secure online software for the delivery of courses while documenting, tracking, and reporting students' learning progress.

Online Course. A course that is delivered 100% via the Internet.

- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.
- The nature of the copyrighted work
- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes

Traditional on-ground instruction refers to instruction in a traditional brick and mortar classroom with a live instructor physically present in the classroom.

Video-Streaming Conference Services. A course that is delivered via Video Teleconferencing, the means by which two or more rooms containing video-teleconferencing equipment/software, acting much like television studios, are linked electronically allowing the participants in one room to see and hear the participants in the other room.

Information Technology Resources

It is important that the institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing technical support for both faculty and students. It is expected that the institution will work to maintain technical and service reliability, to keep pace with technological and pedagogical advancements, to provide timely notification of such changes, and to continue to provide various means of support as technology and learning modes change.

Electronic Communication

The University generally prohibits access to electronic records and communications by anyone other than:

- The designated owner of the account or electronic resource containing the records or communication; or
- The sender or recipient of a particular communication without prior consent from the applicable account owner, sender, or recipient. However, as an institution, the University must monitor, review, and disclose electronic records and communications stored or transmitted using the University's information resources as necessary to:
- Comply with the provisions of the United States Information Act, other pertinent laws, Shaw University Rules and Regulations, and University policies;
- Satisfy other legal obligations, such as subpoenas and court orders;
- Protect and sustain the operational performance and integrity of University information systems and business processes;

- Facilitate security reviews, audits, and investigations by authorized individuals in the performance of their assigned duties; and
- Protect and support the legitimate interests of the University and other users, as determined by the vice president for Information Technology, in consultation with the Shaw University's counsel.

Individuals seeking non-consensual access to electronic records or communications residing within a user account or University information resource assigned to another user shall make such requests in writing to Chief Information Officer. The requests must fully describe the requested records by type and date and must specify the authorization that permits the access. The Chief Information Officer or designee, in consultation with the Shaw University counsel and other University officials, as appropriate to the circumstances, will approve or deny the request. This provision applies to all user accounts and information resources, including those assigned to deceased, incapacitated, or otherwise unreachable individuals.

Scholarly Data - documents, files, and other items of information created, developed, collected, or maintained solely for research or instructional purposes, or for direct support of those purposes. Examples include the scholarly work of faculty or students, the personal or intellectual property of individuals, and instructional content in which the University has no ownership interest or license. Owners of scholarly data shall ensure that the security and privacy controls of third-party service providers are adequate to protect the security and privacy of their data. Note that research-related data held by units with research administration and oversight responsibilities (e.g., the Office of Sponsored Programs is considered business data (as defined below).

Business Data - documents, files, and other items of information created, collected, maintained, and used to support the continued operations of Shaw University. Examples include administrative records, student education records, financial and human resource records, works made for hire, commissioned works, and similar informational objects, held by the institution's organizational units, contracted service providers, or individual faculty or staff. Business data also includes the following subsets of scholarly data (as defined above):

- Informational items in which the University has an ownership interest; and
- Informational items licensed by the University for instructional or research purposes.

Users

Shaw University provides restricted access to its information resources to person with the following University affiliations:

- A. Students
- B. Faculty members
- C. Regular and non -student non regular- staff employees
- D. Retired faculty, administrators, and staff
- E. Consultants and contractors
- F. Regents, administrators, and staff
- G. Guest as permitted by Information Resources administration

Individuals may possess multiple concurrent University affiliations (e.g., staff member enrolled in courses is also a student affiliate). The scope of authorized access and use will vary over time in accordance with the user's affiliations.

In accordance with this policy, IT will make the initial determination regarding an individual's eligibility to obtain and retain an active Shaw University account. In appropriate situations, software administered by IT automates this process. IT will escalate cases where eligibility is disputed or unclear to the Chief Operating Officer of the University for review and resolution.

The University has established procedures for verifying the identity and affiliations of person seeking to access and use University information resources. The University shall revoke a person's access to a University information resource when the person no longer has an affiliation that eligible to use that resource. The University automatically and periodically validates the eligibility of all users with official University sources such as faculty and staff personnel records and student enrollment records. The University may use other sources, when necessary, to accurately assess the status of a person's ongoing affiliation.

Unless eligible through another affiliation, Shaw University alumni are not eligible to maintain an active University Student ID for use in accessing the University's information resources. Shaw University alumni may forward emails from their official University address to an alternate email address at their own risk. The University cannot guarantee and is not responsible for the delivery or protection of emails forwarded from the official University address to any other address. Individuals who forward University emails assume personal responsibility for their timely delivery and their protection from improper disclosure once it leaves the University network.

Technology and Data Property of the University

Technology Resources shall coordinate the connection and network address assignment of any and all devices on the University network. Other departments and individual users may not install, alter, extend or re-transmit network services in any way. Departments and individual users are prohibited from attaching or contracting with a vendor to attach equipment such as routers, switches, hubs, firewall appliances, wireless access points, virtual private network (VPN) servers, network address translators, proxy servers, and dial-up servers to the University network without prior authorization from Technology Resources. Technology Resources may disconnect and confiscate any unauthorized network device, including wireless routers and access points. Personal software firewalls are permitted, as are printers, scanners, and similar peripheral devices if directly connected as a slave device to a desktop or notebook computer. Technology Resources reserves the right to monitor and audit individual devices, systems, and general network traffic to ensure compliance with this and other University policies.

No Expectation of Privacy

Users of the University's information resources expressly consent to monitoring and review by the University for these purposes. If such monitoring or review reveals evidence of possible criminal activity, the University administration may provide that evidence to law enforcement officials without notice to the user. Further, all users should understand that while the University takes reasonable precautions, as evidenced by its information security program, it is unable to guarantee the protection of electronic files, data, or emails from unauthorized or inappropriate access or disclosure.

Consequently, users should not expect privacy in their use of Shaw University information resources.

Passwords and Access Control

Only the owner of an individual domain account is authorized to know and use the password for that domain account and may not disclose the password to another party. No University component, employee, representative, or agent may ask the owner of a Shaw University domain account to divulge their password.

- Whenever the University newly activates or reactivates a domain account, it will randomly generate a new, pre-expired password for the associated Student ID to force a password change by the account owner upon initial login.
- Account owners shall affirm their knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities relative to information security and the appropriate use of information resources each time they change their account password.
- Authorized Information Technology personnel may unilaterally suspend or block access by an account when, in their professional judgment and in the course of their assigned duties, such action is necessary to:
 - Protect the confidentiality, integrity, availability, or functionality of University information resources.
 - Protect the University from harm or liability; or
 - Prevent use or abuse of the account by a person or persons other than the account's legitimate owner.
- Authorized Information Technology personnel may block access to a domain account without advance notice when presented with a written request from appropriate University authorities, the department head of an employee's organizational unit, or the sponsor of the account. Reasons for such a block include involuntary employee termination, elevated concern for the security of information resources, and reasonable belief that the account is being used in activities that are prohibited by applicable law or University policy.
- The University will deactivate the domain accounts of individuals who, based upon an automated review of the account owner information from its official information sources, no longer qualify for ownership of a domain account under the terms of this policy. Owners of deactivated domain accounts must re-validate their identity and possess an eligible University affiliation before they may reactivate their Student ID and regain access to the University's information resources.
- The University may delete, without any notification or recovery obligation, files or other information resources attributable to any domain account that is in a deactivated state and no longer possesses an eligible University affiliation.

Personal identifiable information collected by the University may be used, at the discretion of the institution, as the basis for identity verification. For instance, a student requesting that their learning system password be reset may be asked to provide two or more pieces of information for comparison with data on file, or to come to the IT Support in person with a photo ID or verification.

File Storage

Only University related data and files can be stored on our infrastructure. The University assumes no responsibility for the loss, protection or restoration of personal data.

Administrative staff members are required to store all data, information or files that are created or managed as part of their work function on the departmental or workgroup shares. Constituents have the option of using their individual shared or local computer storage as a working, staging or testing resource. If data is considered either critical or required for day-to-day operations to academic, administrative or research needs, then it must be stored in your departmental or workgroup share. Your department/organization may have additional requirements on how the data is managed such as file naming conventions, structure of folders, version retention, etc.

- Unless you have received a waiver from IT, no data relating to you or someone else which contain Social Security Numbers, credit cards or personal identifiable information can be stored, transmitted or used on University resources. For more details, read Shaw University's SSN Policy. If you encounter any of these types of data, contact your manager and IT support specialist immediately.

- Materials that are subject to a copyright where the University or user does not have a license for such materials should not be stored on University resources, including hosted services/systems. The University has a strict compliance policy that all users must adhere to since improper or unauthorized usage of copyright material is aggressively monitored by external sources and offending institutions and individuals can be held liable and subject to significant penalties.
- Periodically, and at the discretion of each department's business procedures, all constituents should review and audit data accessible in their individual data store, departmental and workgroup shares and delete any files that are no longer needed. Data storage is a finite resource that needs to be managed proactively and has detrimental impact on our academic programs and infrastructure if it goes unchecked.
- Files and folders should be named appropriately and uniquely for ease of management and discovery should a restoration of data be required.
- Data backups of individual data stores, departmental and workgroup shares are performed on a daily basis. Data can be restored as far back as 30 days from the time they were deleted or modified.

If individual or departmental needs arise for additional storage for legitimate business needs, your designated IT technology specialist should be contacted to assist with the request.

Third Party Providers

Department Heads shall address the applicable IT contracting issues when acquiring IT products or services from third-party providers. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall maintain and assist Department Heads with evaluation and review of proposed agreements with third-party providers of IT products or services.

University Departments and individual faculty and staff shall not entrust any third-party provider with sensitive or confidential business data in the absence of a duly approved and authorized agreement between the University and the provider.

Public Web information services from third-party providers (e.g., Google, Dropbox, etc.) may be inappropriate for storing, sharing, or processing business data because their standard terms of service may fail to afford adequate protection against loss, destruction, or inappropriate use or disclosure of these data. Consistent with Shaw University policy, only designated University officials may enter into information services agreements involving the University's business data.

Before engaging third-party IT products or services to store, share, or process scholarly data, individuals shall review Shaw University policies for guidance and insight into the numerous issues that should be considered. These issues include, but not limited to information security, personal privacy, personal liability, copyright and content ownership, minimum service levels, and provider lock-in. Additionally, staff in the Office of Digital Teaching and Learning can provide experienced assistance in determining the efficacy and suitability of third-party products and services for specific scholarly endeavors.

University faculty and staff who individually engage third-party services by accepting online Terms of Service or Terms of Use agreements are personally liable for compliance with those agreements, as well as any consequences that result from their engagement with those third-party services.

Electronic Mail

Shaw University considers email a significant information resource and an appropriate mechanism for official University communication. The University provides official University email addresses and services to its students, faculty, staff, retirees, and organizational units for this purpose and to enhance the efficiency of educational and administrative processes. In providing these services, the University anticipates that email recipients will access and read University communications in a timely fashion.

Copyrights

Shaw University follows the guidelines outlined by SACSCOC, WCEN, and NC-SARA with regard to ownership of materials and utilization of revenues derived from the creation and production of intellectual property found in the Shaw University Intellectual Property and Shared Royalties Policy and in Shaw University's Intellectual Property and Shared Royalties Policy. Faculty must keep in mind copyright, trademark, and licensing issues when designing distance education courses and therefore should be familiar with Shaw University Copyright Policy. Examples include the use of copyrighted photographs, graphics, text selections, audio clips from a song, or video clips from a movie.

As Shaw University policy states, the usual permissions must be acquired and documented by the faculty member. When in doubt about the usage of copyright ownership, it is preferable to be overly cautious. If copyright permission cannot be obtained or if ownership is questionable, faculty should substitute other resources where copyright permission is clear and obtainable, or substitute resources that are in the public domain.

Instructors

- A.** All faculty members who teach distance education courses are required to complete the designated distance education-training program prior to being assigned as instructor-of-record for a proposed distance education course offering. Faculty must achieve satisfactory completion of all training course mastery exercises and an overall score of >80%. The Director of Digital Teaching and Learning certifies when the designated training program has been satisfactorily completed.
- B.** All faculty members completing the designated distance education-training program must outline distance education course content and develop a course in the LMS, which will be evaluated as part of the training program.
 - 1.** Certified faculty (instructors) are required to continue ongoing professional learning of educational technologies (current features of the LMS, pedagogy in Distance Education, communication tools) by attending trainings and webinars annually provided by the DTL.

Deans, Department Heads, Academic Affairs, and the DTL will recommend instructors who must become re-certified to teach distance education courses through satisfactory completion of the training course program or a designated set of training modules. Instructors who do not complete recertification training will no longer be eligible for teaching distance education course.

Students

- A. Students have access to up-to-date video tutorials and other resources on the LMS Shaw Online site and on the DTL Student Resources site. Instructors must encourage students to utilize these resources as needed.
- B. The same library and learning resources are available for students enrolled in distance education courses as they are for students taking face-to-face courses.

Students are given a secure login/password to ensure their identity on the LMS. Students must not share nor publish their secure login credentials with/for anyone.

Quality Matters / Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Standards

Online courses are evaluated each semester by the Deans and/or Department Heads using the Quality Matters for Higher Education Standards Rubric. Deans and/or their designees are assigned observer rights in the LMS, allowing them secure access to all courses for the purposes of monitoring and providing feedback.

Hybrid and VTC courses are reviewed for key course components each semester as well by a Dean and/or Division Head.

Each semester, early feedback is provided to instructors with the intent of guiding continuous improvement in distance education courses offered through Shaw University.

The most up to date Online Learning Consortium and Quality Matters rubric may be found on the Digital Teaching and Learning SharePoint page

Open Educational Resources / Technology (OER/OET)

This policy provides guidance to faculty in achieving the following outcomes through utilization of zero cost course materials at Shaw University, as deemed appropriate by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of Academic Support, Office of Digital Teaching and Learning, Department Dean and faculty member responsible for selecting course materials:

- improve student success through increased access and affordability,
- support for faculty in providing a transformative educational experience,
- deliver on our grant and university mission to extend knowledge to broader state, national, and global communities.

The use of any OER/OET materials must be presented to and approved by the Director of Digital Teaching and Learning prior to the adoption of such items. The items must be from a database/source recognized or supported by the Director of Library Services.

This policy is specific to the creation and adoption of open educational resources (OER), intended to replace course materials such as textbooks and online assignment tools, by Shaw University faculty who employ university resources, either in the form of internal development or grant funds or use of SU support staff and/or tools. Pursuant to the SU Faculty Manual, (Copyright Policy), such materials are considered works made for hire and copyright is owned by Shaw University and Shaw University will not waive its rights in the copyright.

Materials created for Shaw University courses and using the university delivery platform will be openly licensed as OER through Creative Commons. It is recommended that the developer select CC BY* as the appropriate license. OER are defined publicly available material that is licensed in such a way as to allow free reuse by others with reuse permissions varying by license type.

In addition, faculty creating zero cost digital course materials with University resources, may elect to publish them as an OER as defined above in which case the stipulations below apply.

OER Policy Statement

Work-for-hire OER materials are published and licensed by SU through the Creative Commons CC BY license to allow others to adopt, remix, reuse and add to the work as long as SU and the original faculty developer are credited. The faculty developer will have the right to use the OER consistent with CC BY licensing standards as noted above. The faculty developer will have the right to be identified as a creator of the work

OER materials shall be used in accordance with the SU licensing standards; the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998; applicable state and federal copyright laws; accepted best practices of the OER community; and college and departmental policies and academic standards.

OER Procedures and Responsibilities

With the support of University entities with knowledge and expertise in copyright law, ADA accessibility, as well as State and Federal policy, faculty developing or adapting OER material shall assume responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the materials, during the term of use, as the OER materials relate to these areas.

OER Guidelines / Support for OER Identification and Development

As subject matter experts, faculty are responsible for selecting of course materials and are encouraged to develop and/or adopt OER of equal or greater quality than commercially distributed publisher content currently available for adoption.

Academic Support Services will serve in support role for faculty wishing to locate, adopt and/or develop OERs. Academic support team will support staff to aid in the research, production, delivery and access for OER developers and users.

OER Technical Format

The University recommends that written and interactive digital teaching resources should be published in an appropriate repository or public-access website in order to maximize discovery and use by others and provides this service for OER development. Where OER have been created as part of an externally funded activity, any storage and/or repository locations mandated as a condition of the funding should be used.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

As a demonstration of Shaw University's commitment to continuous improvement and quality Distance Education, the University will annually renew its approval through the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. The University agrees to follow the Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education through annual evaluation of its distance education programs in accordance with these guidelines along with other expectations of the Council, facilitated by Digital Teaching and Learning.

Forms

Distance Education forms can be found on the University's Learning Management System and the Digital Teaching and Learning SharePoint site.