



# Policy Statement

## EMS Distance Learning Courses

### **Purpose:**

This policy outlines BEMS policy and philosophy as it relates to Distance Learning. At this time, BEMS currently approves hybrid courses, but approves no courses completely on-line. This policy will guide any program who wishes to offer courses or programs through distance learning in the future, subject to the approval of the Bureau of EMS.

### **Definitions:**

**Hybrid:** A live delivery of learning both virtually and in person. It combines face- to -face learning with online learning, also known as blended learning. Combines online education and instruction within a physical location-based classroom. Requires the physical presence of student and teacher with control over time and place.

**In – person:** Traditional brick and mortar instructional style of learning where both the teacher and student are physically located in the classroom where the instruction is being held.

**WebBased Video Conference Software:** An electronic platform that can be used to connect with students in a virtual online world. Platforms include but are not limited to Zoom, GoogleMeet, GoToMeeting, WebEx, Teams, Google Classroom.

**Asynchronous:** Students learn on their own. Students learn the same information and follow the same curriculum but at different locations and different times. Allows students to learn on their own schedule (self-paced). Students can access the materials, lectures, and homework at any time. Examples include, watching prerecorded lectures and discussion boards.

**Synchronous:** Classes run in real time with students and instructors attending together from different locations. Operates like a traditional classroom with a set schedule, live interactive discussions, polls, surveys, and shared documents. Instructors are able to interact with students in a live environment.

**Distance Education:** Describes a variety of learning methods that attempt to accommodate a geographical separation, at least for a period of time. These methods include computer and web-based instruction, distance learning theories, TV or video conferencing, or web-based scenarios.

Distance learning courses and programs should not reduce students' access to an institution's programs or faculty. The use of distance learning technology should be to enhance students' access to institutions programs.

## **Application & Purpose**

Distance learning must adhere to existing policies and procedures of New York State Bureau of EMS. The same academic standards for quality and other requirements for traditional courses apply to distance education as well. It is further affirmed that faculty and academic departments retain the primary role in the development, provision, and control of distance learning courses and programs.

The primary purposes of distance learning options and the development of guidelines in this document are:

**Academic Quality** — Institutional support of distance learning options work towards the particular goal of assuring the extension of educational quality standards to distance learning.

Although distance learning options involve separation by time and/or space from the instructor and/or institution, such endeavors extend the resources to create a supportive teaching and learning environment on the campus and off, especially in pursuit of the goal of all parties involved have appropriate technological and other resources available to them.

Though the technologies used to deliver distance education may change frequently, these applications, goals, and responsibilities remain, and this document will continue to provide general guidance on various issues involved in the offering of distance learning courses.

## **Accreditation and Program Approval Issues**

All programs must comply with appropriate NYS State Bureau of EMS guidelines pertaining to program registration. For example, any programs in which more than 50% of coursework is offered online must seek NYS BEMS approval.

Administrators of accredited programs are expected to ensure that quality assurance requirements and standards are met. This includes mission appropriateness, resource commitment, assessment, learning outcomes, and matters of course equivalency.

## **Course Approval & Implementation**

All courses to be offered in a distance learning format must be submitted through the existing NYS Bureau of EMS course approval process.

Distance learning courses are expected to produce equivalent learning outcomes as comparable classroom-based courses. These learning outcomes are clearly identified in terms of knowledge, skills, or credentials in course and program materials. The means chosen for assessing student learning are appropriate to the content, learning design, technologies and characteristics of the learners.

## **Course Implementation**

All institutional administration wishing to provide Distance Learning courses must perform these courses via a synchronous hybrid method. No asynchronous methods consisting over 50% of the didactic component of the course will be approve.

All Web based content shall be recorded and subject to audit.