

2011

Class Scheduling Including E-Learning

**A Faculty Guide on How to Schedule All Your Classes
with the New Parameters**

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University of Alaska

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Quick Start Guide:

Questions to Ask When Scheduling Classes

When you create a new class, you will need to evaluate the new class information and ask the following questions:

1. How much of the class's contact hours are location-based (*the students must attend in a predetermined physical location, like a classroom or a test-proctoring site*)? **See Page 3 for important, detailed information.**
2. Is the class instructor-paced or self-paced? **See Page 4 for important, detailed information.**
3. Does the class have set meeting times (*is the class synchronous*)? **See Page 4 for important, detailed information.**
4. What course delivery methods are used? **See Page 5 for important, detailed information.**
5. Are there any special technologies or notes that need to be added as special notes? **See Page 5 and 6 for important, detailed information.**

I Introduction

This manual is to assist you in scheduling all of your classes with the new fields in Banner. These fields are the result of a process to improve the consistency of coding distance education classes for the University of Alaska system. The focus was originally on distance-delivered classes; however, much of the new system is applicable to other types of classes, and the result is Banner and UAOnline functionality which collect and deliver more complete information to students. The goal is for students to be able to easily determine the class location, pacing, synchronicity, delivery methods, and equipment requirements. Improved search features in UAOnline will help students find classes that truly suit their needs.

Improved consistency and more information will allow students to reach their goals while encouraging best practices and highest standards in service

Faculty training will help ensure that each campus and the entire UA statewide system can better serve students and meet the expectation of the Alaska Legislature.

The background behind this effort to improve distance education coding is provided below and gives an overview of how the new definition and fields were developed, and the process that got us to this point.

2 A New Definition of Distance Education

The new definition of distance education is student centric and focuses on what is referred to as student geography. We ask the question, do students have to attend class in a particular location, or are they free to make that decision independently? Our new coding shows students how much of their class time is location-based.

University of Alaska Definition for Distance Education

Distance education is planned learning that predominantly occurs in situations where a student is not required to be in a predetermined location. As a result, **distance courses** require a different course design and development, different pedagogical techniques, and communication through instructional technologies.

Approved 5/10 by SAC

3 Course Categories

All courses starting in fall 2011 should be given one of the following course categories. The course categories will be entered in the session code field, and so you may also hear them referred to as the session code. The course code will be prominently displayed on the detailed class information page on UAOnline.

0 0% location based (Distance): A category 0 class in which 100% of its delivery is totally independent of location.

Example: A category 0 class is what we think of as the typical distance class. Students can choose where they access delivery, at home, the library, or their favorite coffee shop.

1 1 - 20% location based (Distance-based): A category 1 class is primarily distance delivered, but class attendance at a predetermined location is required from 1% to 20% of the total class time. For a 3-credit course (UAA 45 contact hours), up to 9 hours of location-based instruction is required of the student. (UAS, UAF 37.5 contact hours) up to 7.5 hours

Example: A category 1 class may require one in-person meeting at the start of the class while the rest would be distance delivered.

2 21 - 50% location based (Blended): A category 2 class can have between 21% and 50% of its contact time location-based. For a 3-credit course, 7.5 to 18.8 or 9.5 to 22.5 hours of contact time are location-dependent.

Example: A category 2 class may be one in which the students have regular, location-based meetings scheduled, but a great deal of contact time is done online. Perhaps the location-based time is for a lab meeting while the lecture is done via eLive.

3 51% or more location based (Location-dependent/traditional): Location-based time requirements are 51% or more of course contact hours. They may use in-class videos, but the students must come to class more than 51% of the contact hours for the class.

Example: The best example of a category 3 class is a traditional, face-to-face classroom setting.

Example: Another example of a category 3 class is one in which students have regular eLive or Blackboard sessions, but this web time is less than half the time they spend in class.

Example: Another example would be a class in which students meet regularly in a classroom, but have a scheduled audio conference three times during the semester.

The primary difference between distance classes (category 0, 1, and 2) and location-dependent classes (category 3) is that distance classes are no more than 50% location-based. Another way to think of this is that distance education classes are 50% or more distance delivered.

4 New Parameters Fields for All Classes in Banner

While the following attributes were developed as part of the response to the legislative audit, they are applicable to all classes. As a result, the information must be entered for all classes, and so Course Categories, Pacing, Meeting Times, and Delivery Methods are **REQUIRED FIELDS**.

Course Categories *Based on Percentage of Location-Based Time*

New course category codes show the amount of time (as a percent of total contact hours) the course is location-based. Location, in this case, refers to when the student must be on-campus or at another specific location, and does not apply to the time when a student must simply be logged in to a computer. In Banner the field we use is called the session code. There are four course categories for this attribute (see section 3 for more details about course category codes):

- 0 Distance = 0% location based**
- 1 Distance-based = 1% - 20% location based**
- 2 Blended = 21% - 50% location based**
- 3 Location-dependent/traditional = 51% or more location based**

Course Meeting Times

This attribute has to do with whether a class is synchronous or asynchronous, (i.e., does the class have defined meeting times or not). There are two choices for this field:

- YES**
- NO**

Course Pacing

In a self-paced course a student can complete course work at his/her own pace. In an instructor-paced course a student is required to complete coursework on a specific schedule determined by the instructor. There are two choices for this field:

- INSTRUCTOR-PACED**
- SELF-PACED**

| Course Delivery Methods | |
|--|---|
| A course delivery method is a broadly adopted strategy that combines technology and pedagogy to achieve specific learning outcomes. A delivery method is not just a technology. Choices and definitions are listed below. | |
| Audio Conferencing | Students will be required to participate over a telephone audio bridge. |
| Face-to-face | Students expect to spend at least some of the class in the same room as the other class participants and instructor. e.g., “traditional class instruction.” |
| Independent Learning / Correspondence | Students use self-paced course packets to complete class work. |
| Independent Research/Thesis | Students take part in research independently as a thesis or other type project. Not to be used for group research classes. |
| Internship/Practicum | Students participate in prearranged internship or practicums rather than attending a class. |
| Multimedia | Students will be required to participate in the course using a variety of media formats (DVD, CD, VHS, etc.). Students should consult the course syllabus to ensure they have access to the required equipment. |
| Online / Web delivered | Students participate through a course web site (such as Blackboard). Students can expect to participate using a variety of browser-based discussion and assessment tools. |
| Special Technology | Course uses special technologies that are listed in the section notes (e.g., “course uses Skype,” or “course requires high-speed Internet access for interactive simulations”). |
| Live Television / UATV | Students expect the class to be broadcast live over UATV. During class time, students can interact with their class using live telephone call-in, or Internet chat. Because of the broadcast nature of the class, by registering, students authorize the recording and distribution of their name, likeness, and voice in any medium without restriction. |
| Video Conferencing | Students will be required to participate from a video conferencing site (typically on a UA campus). |
| Web Meeting | Students will participate over the Internet by running web conferencing software on their computer (such as eLive). |
| <p>Delivery methods are not mutually exclusive. As many delivery methods can be chosen as apply to the class. For example: a course can be delivered predominantly using Audio Conference, with course materials delivered via Multimedia and discussions being Online / Web delivered (Blackboard). In this example, the delivery methods of Audio Conferencing, Multimedia, and Online / Web Delivered should be entered.</p> <p>A note about Blackboard: Blackboard (Online / Web delivered) is to be coded as a delivery method <i>only</i> when it is used as an instructional method. This includes discussion boards, readings, tests and quizzes, blogs, and wikis. When Blackboard is only used to receive assignments or for the posting of announcements, grades, and syllabus, it is not considered a delivery method.</p> <p>As a statewide system we are able to define and add to our list of delivery methods. This is something that needs to be done with great deliberation and collaboration with all campuses. We are also able to inactivate delivery methods as they become outdated and unnecessary.</p> | |

5 Equipment Requirements

Each course delivery method has an associated set of equipment requirements that will be displayed to students on UAOnline. The text for the equipment requirements will be the same for all classes that use that delivery method, no matter which campus the class is offered. Because of this, all MAUs must agree upon the equipment requirement descriptions. You will not be able to change this text for your campus's classes only.

As new course delivery methods are added, we will have to decide on the equipment requirement descriptions that will be used by the statewide system. Decisions about the addition of delivery methods and equipment requirements will originate with the campuses and with the Course Catalog and Schedule Team. From there they will be presented to the Banner Student Team for approval. This process will help ensure that the shared coding continues to serve every campus's needs and that it will be used consistently.

Special Notes

You may find that the automatic equipment requirements associated with the delivery methods don't adequately describe what students will need for your classes. When this happens, you can use the special notes (also called section notes) to convey the missing information to your students. Special notes will show up on the detailed class information page on UAOnline.

6 Frequently Asked Questions

Where do video conference classes fit into the new system?

Video conference delivered classes require that the students attend from a particular location, usually on a campus; they are not considered distance delivered. A video conference class may still be considered for one of the distance course categories if 50% or more of its instruction time is delivered using a distance delivery method (web meeting, online/web-delivered, audio conference).

If a class is an in-person, traditionally delivered course (all meeting times are in a set location), but uses Blackboard, does it need to be put into a category other than 3?

Blackboard is a distance delivery method (online/web-delivered) when it is used for the delivery of class instruction. Many campuses offer Blackboard to all of their classes, whether they are distance classes or not. If Blackboard is not used to deliver instruction, then it is not considered a distance class. For instance, if a class only posts announcements and grades in Blackboard, then it isn't considered instruction.

Is it possible to change this new distance coding if the instructor decides to do something different with her or his class?

Absolutely! You can change the codes you enter for the new fields the same way you change any other scheduling information.

OK, this is a lot to remember. What is it I have to check if a class goes from distance to traditional or traditional to distance?

If a class changes the amount of location-based delivery time, you will need to reevaluate it to see which course category code it should have. You also need to see if the change affects the class's pacing (instructor vs. self) or course meeting times (does the class have set meeting times and is this different from how it was previously scheduled). You will also need to check and revise, if necessary, the course delivery methods entries. You may also need to add or revise any special notes.

Why are there so many different categories for these courses? Isn't it just a matter of distance versus traditional?

The four categories show students how much time they can expect to have to spend in a required location. It allows them to better plan their schedules and to register for classes that will truly work for their schedules. The distinction between distance and traditional is still important, and it is still made, but the new coding gives more overall information.

I have a class that uses several different delivery methods, including face-to-face and web meeting. Should I code all of them in? Isn't this a contradiction?

You should code all applicable delivery methods for a class. It appears to be a contradiction, but this is important information for the students. Combined with the course category and other scheduling information, the multiple codes will give a more complete picture of the class to students.

If I have questions about this new distance education coding, who can I ask for help?

For questions about scheduling, contact the office that does Banner scheduling for your campus. For questions about distance education coding, there is a distance education key contact person for each MAU and you can find out who yours is by visiting www.alaska.edu/student-services/distance/contacts/.

Appendix A:

Terms, Definitions, and Online Resources

Terms and Definitions

0 classes – One of the new course categories in which none of the class time is location-based and the entire class is conducted using distance delivery. Also called distance classes.

1 classes – One of the new course categories in which 1% - 20% of class time is location-based (up to 9 hours of contact time for a 3-credit course). The remaining class time is participated in via distance delivery. Also called distance-based classes.

2 classes – One of the new course categories in which 21% - 50% of class time is location-based (9.5-22.5 hours for a 3-credit course). The remaining class time is participated in via distance delivery. Also called blended classes.

3 classes – One of the new course categories in which 51% or more of the class time is location-based (more than 22.5 hours for a 3-credit course). Also called location-dependent/traditional classes.

Asynchronous class– A class that does not have defined meeting times.

Blended classes – One of the new course categories in which 21% - 50% (9.5-22.5 hours for 3-credit course) of class time is location-based. The remaining class time is participated in via distance delivery. Also called category 2 classes.

CCS – Course Catalog and Schedule Team. Statewide team made up of representatives from all MAUs that discuss Banner catalog and scheduling issues, create requests for modifications in Banner, and test Banner changes and upgrades to catalog and schedule Banner screens, processes and reports.

Course delivery method – The method or methods by which the class instruction is delivered. This is a new field in Banner.

Course meeting times – Term refers to the synchronicity of the class. Does a class have meeting times (synchronous) or not (asynchronous)? This is a new field in Banner.

Course pacing – Refers to who determines the pace at which course material is completed. Classes are either instructor-paced or self- (student) paced. This is a new field in Banner.

Distance classes – One of the new course categories in which none of the class time is location-based and the entire class is conducted using distance delivery. Also called category 0 classes.

Distance education – Planned learning that predominantly occurs in situations where a student is not required to be in a predetermined location. As a result, distance courses require a different course design and development, different pedagogical techniques, and communication through instructional technologies. (from the definition approved by SAC, May 2010)

Distance-based classes – One of the new course categories in which 1% - 20% of class time (up to 9 hours of contact time for 3-credit course) is location-based. The remaining class time is participated in via distance delivery. Also called category 1 classes.

Equipment requirements – Text describing equipment requirements will be associated with each course delivery method and will be displayed to students on UAOnline. The equipment requirements text will be the same for all classes that use that delivery method, no matter which campus the class is offered, and therefore the text must be agreed upon by all MAUs.

Instructor-paced – Type of pacing in which the instructor determines the pace at which a course material is completed.

Legislative audit – Refers to an October 2009 audit by the Alaska Legislature of the UA distance education system.

Location-based – Term used to describe class time that students must show up in a certain place at a certain time for. Typically, this would be thought of as “traditional” or “face-to-face” delivery, but can include other types as well (e.g., video conferencing).

Location-dependent/traditional – One of the new course categories in which 51% or more of the class time (more than 22.5 hours for a 3-credit course) is location-based. Also called category 3 classes.

Self-paced – Type of pacing in which the student determines the pace at which course material is completed.

Synchronous class– A class that has defined meeting times.

Online Resources

Statewide Enrollment Services Distance Education
www.alaska.edu/student-services/distance/

Statewide Distance Education Key Contacts by Campus
www.alaska.edu/student-services/distance/contacts/

Statewide Distance Education Enhancements FAQs
www.alaska.edu/student-services/distance/faq/

Appendix B:

Legislative Audit History

In March 2009, the Alaska Legislature published an audit of the University of Alaska (UA) distance education system which listed several recommendations:

1. The President of UA should ensure distance education recommendations are implemented.
2. The President should develop incentives for MAUs [UAA, UAF and UAS] to collaborate on distance education initiatives.
3. The Vice President of Academic Affairs should ensure faculty receive distance education technology training and support.
4. The Vice President of Academic Affairs should develop, implement and enforce use of standard distance education course parameters and uniform course description information.

The changes in our procedure for scheduling are a direct result of the last recommendation.

Anecdotally, many had heard of students who had tried to find distance classes, but were not able to see all of the information or expectations associated with the class. Some students thought that the classes were entirely asynchronous and distance delivered only to register and later find out that the course had a required, in-person meeting for the first class. Most students didn't realize these things until after classes started and many then had trouble finding replacement classes.

The Legislature directed UA to rectify the situation; to get accurate information out to students in a manner that they could easily understand and which was easily accessible. The first step was to devise the UA Distance Education Audit Response Plan. It was in this plan that the UA President instructed specifically that **“Students will have an easily-accessible list of all UA distance education courses, including information on technology needed, time commitment, and other factors needed to successfully complete each course.”**

Two committees were formed that were made up of three representatives from each MAU and three from Statewide. First was the Collaboration and Incentives Committee, whose mission was to investigate ways to increase collaboration between campuses and faculty. Second was the Parameters and Descriptions Committee, whose goal was to address the fourth Legislative recommendation by defining what distance education was to be for UA and determining how to adjust course coding to achieve transparency for UA students. The purpose of these committees was to give representation to all of the MAUs so that the committee outcomes best represented the needs of the various campuses.

The Parameters and Descriptions Committee's final model came from a student-centric and geography-based perspective. The plan recommended that UA accept the following definition of distance education:

*Distance education is planned learning that predominantly occurs in situations where a student is not required to be in a predetermined location. As a result, **distance courses** require a different course design and development, different pedagogical techniques, and communication through instructional technologies.* (accepted by the Statewide Academic Council in May 2010)

Once the committee had defined distance education, they moved on to identifying the information that students needed to be given about their classes, and that the University of Alaska needed to collect for reporting.

The process took more than five months. In the end, the committee determined that we needed a new way of categorizing classes based on the amount of location-based time that is required of the student. We also needed a way to show if a class had meeting times (i.e., was it synchronous or asynchronous), what type of pacing the class had, what delivery method(s) were used, and what the equipment requirements would be. Details about all of these are described in this manual.

Working Groups were formed, including a group that would pursue the changes to Banner and UAOnline so that we could collect the new information, give students a better designed search for classes, and make sure that the new information is displayed in the search results. UA contracted SunGard, the maker of Banner, to do the programming work, and this committee worked with them to create and implement the new design. The Course Catalog and Schedule (CCS) Team was also instrumental in the testing of the new programming and helping to ensure a quality final product.

Another Working Group was formed, the UA Distance Education Training to Code, to plan out training for all employee groups, statewide, who would be affected by these changes (those who schedule classes using Banner, those who provide class schedule information to the Banner schedulers, and faculty). This manual is part of the efforts of this group, Statewide, and the CCS team.