

Defining Distance Education in Texas AEL

Asynchronous Learning:

Learning where students access materials at their own pace, time, and place while interacting with each other and their teacher over longer periods. *Examples of Asynchronous Learning in Distance Education include studying approved distance learning software or printed materials, watching supplemental videos from home, and participating in online discussion boards.* Asynchronous learning results in proxy hours when using an approved DL curriculum.

(Stanford School of Education)

Blended Learning:

A formal learning activity that involves a tight integration of instruction delivered online and in class. It combines in-class learning with online instruction as a collective whole. *Blended Learning allows instructors to base in-class instruction on online observations and base online assignments on in-class observations*

(EdTech Center @ World Education, 2022)

Distance Learning:

A formal learning activity in which participants and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials come in a variety of media, including, but not limited to, web-based programs, print, audio recordings, videos, broadcasts, computer software, and other online technology. Instructors support distance participants using methods including, but not limited to, communication via mail, phone, e-mail, and online software, and through face-to-face instruction. *Distance Learning is delivered through print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, and web-based programs. Instructors communicate with distance learners through mail, telephone, email, and online technologies and software.*

(National Reporting System for Adult Education, p. 1)

Distance Learning Participant:

A distance learner, for federal reporting purposes, is a participant in distance education who has more proxy hours than direct hours at the end of the program year. Distance learners are reported on NRS Table IVC: Educational Gains and Attendance for Participants in Distance Education. Distance learners are a subset of participants with proxy hours. A participant with proxy hours is a participant who engages in distance learning and has completed at least one proxy hour. A participant with proxy hours will not be counted as a distance learner unless the total number of proxy hours exceeds the total number of direct hours. A non-distance learner is a participant who has fewer proxy hours than direct hours or no proxy hours at all.

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Flex Learning:

A formal learning activity that gives participants the choice of attending a synchronous class in person or virtually for direct class hours. *Flex Learning allows instructors to include students to participate virtually or in-person. It allows students the flexibility to either attend face-to-face class or attend that same class virtually.*

(Christiansen Institute, 2022)

Hybrid Learning:

A formal learning activity that involves synchronous face-to-face or remote class plus distance learning curriculum. The two components are NOT fully aligned and students are NOT required to participate in both.

Hybrid Learning allows students to not only participate in synchronous classes, but also gives them the option of working on distance learning curriculum outside of class time.

(EdTech Center @ World Education, 2022)

Remote Learning:

A formal learning activity that involves a group of participants engaging with an instructor at the same time. This is often referred to as synchronous learning. *Remote Learning is delivered through the use of tools such as video conferencing, live chat, webinars, etc.*

(EdTech Center @ World Education, 2022)

Synchronous Learning:

Learning where instructors and students gather at the same time and (virtual or physical) place while interacting in “real-time”. Synchronous learning results in direct hours.

Examples of Synchronous Learning in Distance Education include video conferencing, WhatsApp, Facebook Group or Messenger, Texting (on the REMIND app or phone), and interactive webinars.

(Stanford School of Education)

References:

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Skillrise. (2019). *Upskill with Edtech: Preparing adult learners for the future of work.*
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[State Guidance for Distance Learning](#)

[TWC State Policy Document for Distance Learning](#)