

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996-5000

MADN-ARS

08 August 2020

Memorandum No. 02-20

DEAN'S POLICY AND OPERATING MEMORANDUM
PROCEDURES FOR TEACHING IN A REMOTE ENVIRONMENT

1. Purpose. This Dean's Policy and Operating Memorandum (DPOM) establishes responsibilities and procedures for teaching in a remote environment.
2. General. This memorandum incorporates policy and guidance adopted by the General Committee and Academic Board regarding teaching in a remote environment when coursework cannot be completed face-to-face. This DPOM applies to the entire USMA curriculum, including military and physical coursework, taught in a remote environment.
3. References.
 - a. AR 150-1 United States Military Academy: Organization, Administration and Operation. AR 150-1 provides policy and procedures for the governance of the United States Military Academy. (05 March 2019)
 - b. Academic Program Curriculum and Course Descriptions (The Redbook). The Redbook contains the complete description of the USMA Academic Program, including the core curriculum, majors with their associated honors and thesis options, and minors.
 - c. DPOM 2-3 Classroom and Related Departmental Procedures. DPOM 2-3 provides guidance for routine administrative policies and procedures required to support academic instruction. (22 January 2020)
 - d. DPOM 2-8 Academic Administration. DPOM 2-8 establishes the policies and procedures for administering the cadet academic program, including graduation requirements, course definitions, and transcript credit. (01 May 2019)
 - e. DPOM 2-21 Term-End Examinations. DPOM 2-21 establishes policies and procedures for conducting final examinations in courses at the end of each academic term. (14 May 2002)

f. DPOM 5-5 Managing Curricular Change. DPOM 5-5 establishes responsibilities and procedures for proposing, coordinating, and approving curricular changes. (08 April 2020)

g. Documentation of Academic Work (DAW). The DAW describes procedures for proper documentation, establishes responsibilities, and provides guidelines for other issues related to academic integrity, while educating cadets and faculty properly acknowledging the intellectual properties of others. (July 2017)

4. Definitions.

a. Remote Teaching. Remote teaching is the original application or contingent continuation of a face-to-face academic course when circumstances make it impossible for the class to meet physically.

b. Distance Education (MSCHE definition). Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously.

c. Distance Education Course (MSCHE definition). A course in which the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.

d. Synchronous Learning. Synchronous learning is education that happens in real time or is conducted “live” while in a remote environment. Synchronous courses are generally taught on a prescribed schedule established by the Registrar prior to start of the semester.

e. Asynchronous Learning. Asynchronous learning describes forms of instruction/learning that do not occur at the same time. Asynchronous learning occurs without real-time interaction and often takes the form of pre-recorded course lessons and out-of-class homework assignments.

f. Hybrid (Blended) Education. Any teaching method that involves using a mix of both distance (remote) and face-to-face instruction.

g. Hybrid Distance Learning. Any distance (remote) teaching method that involves the use of both asynchronous and synchronous components.

h. Substantive interaction (MSCHE definition). Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following – (i) Providing direct instruction;

(ii) Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework; (iii) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency; (iv) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or (v) Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.

5. Procedures for Teaching in a Remote Environment.

a. Academic Schedule (Buff Card). The Registrar will update the schedule as needed for any transition to teaching in a remote environment. Depending on the situation, either or both the daily schedule and the attendance schedule may be modified.

b. Cadet Behavior in the Remote Environment. Cadets will conduct themselves in the remote environment just as they would in the face-to-face classroom. Standards of behavior and appearance will be IAW USCC SOP.

c. Instruction.

(1) Mode of Instruction. The mode of instruction in a remote environment for USMA courses should strive to provide the best learning experience possible for cadets, taking into account the discipline of the course, ease of the transition to the remote environment, and other work environment factors. Remote courses should be comprised, when possible, of an effective incorporation of asynchronous methods with deliberate, meaningful synchronous teaching. Synchronous meetings should be deliberately designed to form authentic student engagement.

(a) All USMA courses taught in a remote environment will have some synchronous component.

(b) Synchronous classes will be taught only during the scheduled class period.

(c) Asynchronous classes will align content IAW with scheduled class periods and give cadets a substantial window of time to complete course assignments (usually between 24-48 hours).

(d) When hybrid distance learning is used, the synchronous components should not duplicate the asynchronous components. Instead, the synchronous components should focus on achieving deeper levels of learning and retention through deliberate student engagement activities and potentially time to work on upcoming assignments with immediate access to the instructor.

(2) Method of Instruction.

(a) Platform. Instructors are strongly encouraged to use one home platform, preferably supported by USMA, for any individual course. Instructors may use

platforms associated with approved course materials (such as those provided by the publisher of the course textbook) but are recommended to minimize the overall use of multiple platforms within any individual course. Microsoft Teams and the Learning Management System (LMS) Blackboard/Blackboard Collaborate are the only platforms currently supported by USMA.

(b) Assignments. Digital assignments should have clearly defined instructions, be assigned well in advance of the due date, and be accompanied by an e-Acknowledgment Statement (DAW) for cadets to sign.

(c) Class planning. Instructors should plan their course specifically for the remote environment in a way that supports regular, substantive synchronous or asynchronous interaction between cadets and the instructor.

d. Video Recording / Sharing.

(1) Definitions and Policies. There are two fundamentally different types of video recordings that pertain to academic use and are governed by different policies.

(a) Instructor-Only Recording. A video recording that includes images and sounds that only feature an instructor and/or assistants to the instructor. This includes recordings of lectures, solution procedures, equipment demonstrations, and similar instructional techniques that are carried out by an instructor, either pre-recorded or with a live class. When recording a live class, student reactions (e.g., laughing, applause, asking clarifying questions, repeating according to instructor prompts) may be heard, but the cadet(s) must not be personally identifiable. Although a cadet may volunteer as an instructor assistant for the creation of this type of video, they should be introduced as such, and essentially be following an instructor-provided script. This type of video must not show any cadet's actual performance, ideas, or opinions. An instructor-only video recording should be recorded by the instructor or their assistants.

(b) Policy for Instructor-Only Recordings. Limitations for the distribution of this type of recording are IAW existing laws and regulations governing use and public distribution of course materials (Fair Use, etc.). Instructors may use any hosting platform they wish to provide whatever public or private access they desire for their content if they are in accordance with existing regulations. As long as this type of video was created on government time or equipment, there should be a reasonable expectation that the video can be reused for instructional purposes by other instructors at USMA without any permission necessarily provided by the owner. For instance, it would be appropriate for a course director of a large core course to accumulate and distribute a collection of Instructor-Only Recordings in any manner that supports cadet learning and facilitates mission execution.

(c) Recordings-With-Cadets. For video recordings that capture actual cadet performance, ideas, or opinions that are expressed in a classroom setting, under

an expectation of academic freedom, instructors have an obligation to mitigate, to the best of their abilities, any potential threat that recorded class material may be viewed later, especially in a way that could be embarrassing or situationally challenging for a future leader. A non-exhaustive list of examples of these types of recordings would include cadets:

- asking questions,
- participating in discussions or debates,
- performing board work (attempting to solve problems on a chalkboard or writing surface),
- delivering briefings,
- answering planned or impromptu questions that are asked during a lecture or discussion,
- presenting their own work,
- critiquing the work of others, or
- capturing an Additional Instruction session to show resolution of common questions.

(d) Policy for Recordings-With-Cadets. Classes, labs, and Additional Instruction sessions taught in a remote environment may be recorded with any tool. However, they may only be posted/shared with the software USMA has licensed for video hosting, Microsoft Stream, or similar platform that requires authentication using westpoint.edu credentials (e.g. Blackboard). No other video hosting platform (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Flipgrid, Kaltura, Vimeo, Wistia) is authorized for use. Downloadable files for Recordings-With-Cadets may not be distributed beyond the instructor group that is responsible for course execution.

(2) Instructors will provide cadets with a syllabus statement and a privacy statement that protects both cadets and faculty.

(a) The syllabus statement:

- informs the cadets if the classes can/will be recorded,
- explains why the classes will be recorded,
- identifies who will have access to the recordings, and
- states the recordings' duration of availability.

(b) The privacy statement:

- describes why recorded discussions in the classroom should not be shared outside of the classroom, and
- states in clear language that the recordings performed during both face-to-face and online classwork should be used only for internal class purposes and shared only with other cadets and faculty involved with the class.

(3) The recommended duration of availability for recorded classes can vary, but generally should not exceed one year. For class recordings that are explicitly

restricted in the syllabus statement to classroom purposes only, cadets should be informed if the recordings will not be available to cadets after the course is completed.

(4) Cadets are not allowed to record a class nor share a class recording without the express permission of the instructor and any other cadets involved in the video.

(5) Any sharing, by faculty or cadets, of class recordings beyond the cadets enrolled in the section and instructor group responsible for course execution requires informed consent of both cadets and the instructor.

(6) Faculty may use recorded classes for new instructor training purposes as long as all cadets and instructors in the video are aware the recording may be used for this purpose in the future.

e. Attendance. Attendance will be taken for each course observance regardless of the mode of instruction (synchronous or asynchronous).

(1) Attendance reports should be filed in AMS as soon as possible but no later than midnight (EST) on the day of the scheduled class attendance.

(2) For synchronous attendances, attendance should be reported immediately in AMS.

(3) For asynchronous attendances, attendance must be filed in AMS NLT 24 hours after the scheduled attendance period.

(4) For hybrid (blended) attendances, attendance reports for in-class (face-to-face) cadets should be reported immediately. Reports for out-of-class (remote) cadets participating in that course lesson will be reported, as applicable, IAW the policy for synchronous or asynchronous attendances listed above.

(5) Verification of attendance may take the following forms:

(a) Verification of identity through visual recognition of a cadet in an online format.

(b) Oral or written report of a designated section marcher, IAW USCC SOP and instructions disseminated by the Dean and Department Heads.

(c) Email from the cadet's westpoint.edu address.

(d) Text or phone call from a cadet from their cell phone number of record (listed on their cadet profile, "phone," in AMS).

(e) Submission of an assignment (forum post, essay, quiz, etc.) via Blackboard or other online learning system assessable only through a westpoint.edu email address.

(f) Attendance taken via chat or other electronic function of Teams, Blackboard, or other Department approved online course teaching platforms.

(g) Any other forms of verification of attendance as approved by the Department Head for the department of instruction. Department Heads should establish appropriate accountability measures for cadets enrolled in project-based courses that do not have specific meeting times.

(6) An instructor may use their discretion to mark their cadet as “absent” or “departed early” if they fail to respond in class after the initial roll call is taken. Instructors should discuss with the cadet the lack of response during course time and mark attendance accordingly (including “present” if the cadet is simply unable to participate due to genuine technical issues).

(7) An Instructor should contact a cadet's TAC and enter a report in the Cadet Alert Program (CAP APP in AMS) if they have any concerns about cadet attendance (e.g., a cadet attendance cannot be verified within 24 hours, a cadet repeatedly does not report for class, a cadet reports missing class repeatedly due to technical issues, repeated lack of responsiveness in a course that leads to the cadet being marked “absent” even if they indicated an internet presence, lack of private space, stress or other personal difficulties, etc.).

f. Additional Instruction (AI). Material covered in additional instruction is restricted to that which was previously taught during a regularly scheduled class attendance or, as is often the case with courses with a significant research component, to related material in the course discipline as appropriate. Pre-teaching a class during AI is not permitted. Although additional instruction is voluntary, once a cadet has made an appointment to receive AI or otherwise committed himself/herself to attend a specified time, it becomes mandatory and the cadet should be held accountable IAW existing procedures in case of absence. Cadets should also prepare sufficiently for the AI session (create specific questions, identify conversation points, etc.) as AI should not be used to reteach a class. Refer to DPOM 02-03 for full description of AI.

(1) Expectations for AI.

(a) Individual and group AI are authorized.

(b) Faculty should clearly define and share with cadets their expectations and availability for AI, especially given the open nature of the remote environment and the possibility that cadets may be attending classes while being physically located in different time zones. The availability and responsiveness of

instructors to online communication varies depending on a number of factors, such as an instructor's other teaching, research, service and advising schedules; the type and speed of technology access that an instructor has when off post; and the nature of the course. Cadets should expect that each instructor will (a) respond in a timely fashion and (b) make clear to cadets at the start of the course or when they begin working with cadets as an advisor, when and how often cadets can typically expect a response. Cadets should allow at least one full business day for a reply from instructors, understanding that faculty may be out-of-office and unable to occasionally reply on workdays. Cadets should not expect replies from instructors on weekends or holidays, or outside of normal business hours on workdays. Some instructors may choose to make occasional replies at these times, but cadets should not expect them to be available at these times.

(c) AI may be scheduled at any time that is mutually agreeable to the cadet and the instructor. AI is generally discouraged after the beginning of evening study period. In cases where departmental inquiry reveals that it has been impractical for a needful cadet to receive AI during the academic day, AI may be conducted during the evening study period. Since evening AI can adversely affect the cadets' preparation for the next day's classes, it must be employed judiciously. No change from current policy.

(d) Instructors should generally try to respond to requests for AI from cadets within 24 hours of the request and should endeavor to provide AI within 72 hours of the request. If this is not feasible, the instructor should make a good faith effort to coordinate with another instructor or the course director to identify an alternate means of providing assistance to the requesting cadet.

(e) AI sessions should not be recorded. If a sufficient number of cadets appear to have questions or concerns about the same topic and the instructor determines that a pre-recorded video would be beneficial for all cadets in the course to review, the instructor should record an instructor-only video and share IAW the guidelines in 5.d.(1).ii. of this current document.

(2) Location. In a remote environment, cadets may receive AI at times and places mutually agreeable to them and their instructors that are not in conflict with other class or duty responsibilities during the week.

(a) AI may be conducted virtually, such as through Microsoft Teams.

(b) Regardless of the mode of instruction for the course (fully remote, mixture of face-to-face and remote components), AI may be conducted in person, provided that both faculty and cadets are available for face-to-face interaction and both parties observe all policies, guidance, and emergency declarations made by USMA and the jurisdictions in which they are located.

g. Standards and Testing.

(1) Academic standards. Academic standards and course learning outcomes for any course taught in a remote environment will be as equivalent as possible to face-to-face instruction. Any substantive change to a course (standards, learning outcomes, etc.) should undergo a curricular review IAW DPOM 5-5.

(2) Expectations for Grading. Instructors should assign grades in accordance with traditional guidelines.

(3) Graded Events (WRITs, WPRs, Papers, Projects, etc.).

(a) Take-home exams. Take-home exams (writs, WPRs, Papers, Projects, etc.) are authorized.

(b) Take-home exams should take no longer to complete than the time period allowed per attendance. The response duration and exam period must be flexible enough to allow the cadet sufficient time for logistical preparation for the exam (printing, downloading, etc.) and for the logistics of submitting the exam (reading and signing the honor statement, converting to appropriate digital formats for submission, etc.). The response duration should also be flexible enough to manage potential connectivity challenges.

(c) Take-home exams administered synchronously will be given only during the class period assigned to the course or during a common period in the academic schedule (such as a Dean's hour) in which exams may be administered.

(d) Take-home exams administered asynchronously will be administered with an extended exam period (usually 24-48 hours) that concurrently allows the cadet sufficient time to take the test and to prepare for other courses and coursework scheduled within the same exam period. Take-home exams for any individual course should not preclude work being completed for other courses that a cadet may be taking. The time required for the examination should not exceed the time required for homework for that course meeting (class time plus prep time) unless compensatory time is given.

(e) All take-home exams should be accompanied by a set of clearly delineated instructions. These instructions should include:

- the parameters of the exam period (when the exam is available to cadets and when it is due);
- how the exam may be completed (e.g., the exam must be completed in one block of time once it has been started, cadets may not return to previous questions, etc.);
- the maximum response duration, being the length of time that can be spent by a cadet to develop responses for the exam, which does not include any logistical preparation

- or submission;
- the extent to which collaboration with other cadets is allowed (range of none to a specified number of cadets for group work);
- the resources available to the cadet during the time the exam is taken (open notes, open book, open internet, handmade study sheet, calculator, computer, etc...refer to DPOM 02-03 for the full list); and
- an honor statement to be signed before and at the end of taking an exam.

(f) Cadets are not authorized to discuss content of an exam until the exam has been released from academic security by the course director. The instructor will clearly identify and notify cadets of the parameters of the exam period in advance of the exam being administered. In particular, instructors should identify when cadets may begin to discuss the exam (e.g., “cadets may not discuss exams until all cadets from their assigned section have completed the exam,” “exams can be discussed after [date],” etc.). Discussion, here, is defined as either written or verbal communication regarding the content, structure, or other general information regarding the exam. Course directors should include the following statement on all exams: **“This WPR (or TEE) Exam will be released from academic security on DD Month YYYY. You may not discuss any aspects of this exam with anyone except an XX### instructor.”**

(g) With respect to classroom writs, WPRs, TEEs, and other graded exercises presented outside of the established exam period, departments will not administer versions that are so similar that unrestricted discussions of the earlier version would provide unfair advantage to the cadets taking the later version.

(h) Graded events in the remote environment should be designed and evaluated to improve cadet learning while at the same time minimizing underlying motivation for committing honor violations. Authentic assessments like “Compile your work for the semester into a portfolio and write an executive summary describing the contents” have been demonstrated to increase the depth of learning and to discourage honor violations versus questions that rely on rote memory or where solutions are easily found on the internet. Below is a list (not exhaustive) of additional safeguard practices if choosing to use more traditional forms of assessments:

- multiple versions of the test,
- shuffling questions (sequencing of questions being different for each cadet),
- enforced sequencing of questions (not allowing cadets to access previous questions),
- randomized use of questions from a larger test bank,
- use of a lockdown browser, or
- creating new test bank questions to minimize the chance of retrieval with a search engine.

(i) All graded events, including general course assignments, must be accompanied by a signed e-Acknowledgment statement (DAW) to be eligible for graded credit if the work for the event is completed outside of the class or exam period. The e-Acknowledgment statement is different from the Honor statement in that it is an acknowledgment of work completed outside of the classroom, in the remote environment, and is required for the work to be graded. The Honor statement is a reiteration of the cadet's adherence to the Cadet Honor Code prior to or after completing an event and is strongly encouraged in addition to an e-Acknowledgment statement for outside work. Likewise, an Honor statement is equally recommended for graded events that generally would not require an e-Acknowledgment statement (such as a synchronous exam completed during the class period). Honor statements can take many forms (e.g., a word document created by the Course Director, a custom honor question in the online platform utilized by the course, [like ExpertTA], etc.).

(4) Term End Exams (TEEs).

(a) TEEs will be scheduled IAW DPOM 02-21.

(b) TEEs will not exceed 3 ½ hours in length. There is no change to this current policy for the remote environment.

(c) Departments will administer TEEs only on the dates and times shown on the final schedule. Asynchronous TEEs are not authorized. There is no change to this currently policy for the remote environment.

(d) Take-home TEEs are authorized but must take no longer than 3 ½ hours to complete and are to be turned in at the end of the assigned exam period.

(e) Department Heads may exempt a course from a TEE when Cadet mastery of course material can be better evaluated using an instrument other than a written examination (e.g., a major paper, project or design). Regardless of the instrument used in lieu of a written examination, all work must be completed and submitted no later than the end of the last scheduled class period or the last day of classes. Departments will notify AARS of all exemptions granted. There is no change to this current policy for the remote environment.

(f) Cadets can be excused from a TEE by the Department Head on a case-by-case basis or as fairly applied to a group, IAW DPOM 02-21, 5.b.3(a-b). The Department Head may elect to excuse the cadet(s) from the TEE requirement and award a final grade based on performance up to that point (grade freeze) in the course. This option is appropriate when the cadet's expected performance on the exam is not likely to change his or her final grade in the course and the cadet agrees to forgo the opportunity to improve his or her grade by taking the exam. There is no change to this current policy for the remote environment.

(g) TEEs that incorporate work completed outside of the classroom and outside of the assigned exam period must be accompanied by an e-Acknowledgment statement (DAW) for graded credit.

(5) Integrity of online assessments. The use of online proctoring, “lockdown,” or anti-cheat software is permitted, but should be evaluated prior to use for compatibility with the USMA IT system.

h. Final Grades.

(1) No Credit (NC) / Withdrawal (W) policy. Cadets may request to receive a grade of “NC” or withdraw from courses in accordance with DPOM 02-08. There is no change to this policy for the remote environment.

(2) End of Term Procedures.

(a) Departments will notify AARS of all courses taught in a remote environment each semester.

(b) All Course Directors must submit a course end (syllabi update) memorandum to their Department Head for any courses taught in the remote environment for the first time. Departments will provide a copy of the updates to the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Assessment, AARS.

(c) Courses that have previously been taught in a remote environment will be certified by the Head of the Department of Instruction for the course. Significant changes to any courses will be reported to the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Assessment, AARS. Departments may use their discretion to define “significant change,” of which some examples are changes to course learning outcomes, increase or decrease of credit hours awarded to a course, or any intent to teach the course in the remote environment on a consistent basis.

6. Proponent. The proponent for this DPOM is the Academic Affairs Division, Office of the Dean (MADN-ARS), x5324.

FOR THE DEAN OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD:

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