



American
Organization for
Bodywork
Therapies of
Asia

AOBTA[®] Distance Learning Standards

Subjects

Distance learning guidelines only apply to the portions of the 500-hour curriculum that do not involve the learning and demonstration of a physical skill that requires the presence of an instructor. They include:

- Chinese Medicine Theory – except for the demonstration and practice of assessment methods and the palpation of points and/or channels, which must be done in person.
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Ethics
- Business Development

Guidelines

Any competency that involves the learning and demonstration of a physical skill that requires the presence of an instructor is not acceptable for distance learning. This includes technique practice, channel/ point palpation, performing assessment methods essential to the practice of the form (tongue and pulse, hara, channel, point), and clinical practice.

Distance learning must support and utilize regular substantive interaction (RSI). This can be done through synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid learning (see definitions) using a learning management system (LMS), or digital curriculum platform that facilitates RSI between the student and the instructor and among students taking the course.

The course should be taught by credentialed or licensed professionals in the field such as an AOBTA CI, RI or CP; L. Ac. or other NCCAOM credentialed professional but must be approved by an AOBTA CI. Final approval of any course will be made by AOBTA Director of Education in consultation with Peer Review and COSP.

The digital platform must support and include instructor managed formative and summative learning activities for the topics that are considered integral to the learning objectives of the course.

The digital platform must include the documentation of all course components and their completion. This includes: a course syllabus with a course description, learning objectives, topics covered, assignments, tests/quizzes and dates taught; a grade sheet, and a digital record of all assignments.

Distance learning courses must require successful completion of a summative assessment and include it as part of the course grade.

A certificate of completion must be supplied by the instructor.

Distance learning can comprise no more than 49% of any ABT training program.

Correspondence learning without substantive engagement with an instructor is not an acceptable method for 500-hour curriculum subjects. It is an acceptable format for continuing education.

Pre-approved Courses

Once a course has been approved by AOBTA, it will be added to a list of pre-approved courses.

Definitions

Instructor/Student Interaction

Substantive interaction (SI)

Refers to instructor and student engagement in the learning and assessment of course content. It must include direct interaction, assessing and providing feedback on coursework, providing information or responding to questions about the course content or its competencies (learning outcomes), or instructional activities approved by the school's or program's accrediting agency or governing organization standards.

Regular Substantive Interaction (RSI)

Same as above with the added element of a recurring pattern of interaction throughout the course. It provides for SI on a predictable and consistent basis in a way that promotes student engagement and success in learning the course material.

Types of learning

Synchronous

Students participating in learning activities with the instructor simultaneously in real-time. Synchronous distance learning can be achieved via any digital communication platform that allows the instructor and students to meet in real-time from different locations. (This is essentially a traditional classroom experience but done remotely via a Zoom type platform.)

Asynchronous

Students complete course requirements independently without real-time instructor-led interaction (watching pre-recorded lectures, reading books, completing assignments, taking quizzes and exams). However, there are activities and assignments that facilitate engagement with the instructor and/or other students, and the instructor provides substantive, formative and summative feedback at regular intervals to promote the learning objectives of the course. This can be achieved through any digital curriculum platform that delivers, collects and evaluates the course curriculum and learning activities utilizing software and telecom tools. It must facilitate RSI between the students and the instructor.

Hybrid

Regular real-time meetings between students and instructor (synchronous learning) are combined with independent study (asynchronous learning).

Correspondence

Asynchronous learning with no substantive interaction and no formative feedback. The student completes all learning activities independently and submits work for final grading or feedback. This is the typical format for Continuing Ed courses.

Types of Instructor Feedback

Formative

Refers to ungraded or low stakes opportunities for instructors to promote and measure student knowledge and skills. It is ongoing throughout the course and helps the instructor to determine what topics need to be emphasized or clarified to effectively meet the learning needs of the student or the group. Examples of activities that provide formative feedback include: written questions about the reading or lecture material, summaries of reading or lecture material, reflective journaling, documented home practice of assessments or point/channel palpation.

Summative

Typically falls at the end of a topic or semester. It provides an evaluation of how much a student and the class has learned and is often graded. When tied to specific class learning objectives it can be used as course feedback, providing the instructor with feedback about the effectiveness of the course design and delivery. Examples of summative feedback activities include: written quizzes and exams, practical exams, final projects, or research papers.

Types of platforms

Learning management system (LMS)

A software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational courses. (Examples: Thinkific, Ruzuku, Moodle)

Digital Communication Platform

A software or web-based product that supports the use of audio and video technology (both hardware and software) to create a synchronous digital meeting space between two or more people in different physical locations. Participants can see and hear each other through this technology. (example; Zoom)

Digital Curriculum Platform

A program that delivers, collects, evaluates and/or stores any portion of their curriculum and learning activities using software and/or telecommunications tools. These tools are also used to facilitate regular and substantive interaction or engagement among students and between students and instructor(s) (example: Google classroom).