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The UAB system and flexible university: the UFPA case

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The offer of undergraduate distance learning (DL) courses, through Universidade Aberta do Brasil or Open University of Brazil (UAB) within Public Establishments of Higher Education (IPES), generates changes in university institutional organization, which have strongly resulted in a flexibilization of the threefold mission of teaching, research, and extension. **Objectives:** Thus, this paper aims at inquiring about how UAB has been made part of the Federal University of Pará (UFPA) and which consequences that system has had for university education. Methodology: The research adopts a qualitative approach, with document for data analysis. Data were gathered through official documents published by UFPA itself: Pedagogical Projects of its DL courses and announcements of programs, scholarships and financial assistance, as they are present in the Social Action Management System (SIGAEST) website, from 2013 to 2022. Results: Results revealed how weakened the threefold mission of teaching, research, and extension has become within the scope of DL/UAB undergraduate course offering, due to the Pedagogical Projects not being aligned to UFPA proposals that preside over research and extension. In addition, DL/UAB students are not included in several different announcements for social action and financial assistance published by the university, for the announcements analyzed stablish that only regular traditional course students are suitable to partake in such opportunities. Conclusion: Conclude that DL being incorporated into IPES, through the UAB system, causes academic structure flexibilization, which in turn may impact teaching and learning processes in the realm of public university, resulting in major harms in education.

KEYWORDS

Open University of Brazil. Institutional flexibilization. Federal University of Pará.

O sistema UAB e a universidade flexível: o caso da UFPA

RESUMO

Introdução: A oferta de cursos de graduação a distância, por meio do sistema Universidade Aberta do Brasil (UAB) nas Instituições Públicas de Ensino Superior (IPES), produz alterações na organização institucional das universidades, que repercutem fortemente na flexibilização do tripé ensino-pesquisa-extensão. Objetivo: Nesse sentido, este artigo busca investigar a inserção da UAB na Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA) e as repercussões desse sistema no tocante à formação universitária. Metodologia: A pesquisa é de abordagem qualitativa, utilizou-se a pesquisa documental para a análise dos dados. Os dados foram coletados em documentos oficiais publicados pela UFPA, quais sejam: os Projetos Pedagógicos dos seus cursos EAD e editais de programas, bolsas e auxílios, presentes no site do Sistema Gerencial de Assistência Estudantil (SIGAEST), no período de 2013 a 2022. Resultados: Os resultados das análises revelam o enfraquecimento do tripé ensinopesquisa-extensão no âmbito da oferta de cursos de graduação EAD/UAB, dado que os Projetos Pedagógicos não estão em consonância com as resoluções da UFPA que regulamentam a pesquisa e a extensão. Além disso, os estudantes da EAD/UAB não são contemplados em diferentes editais de assistência estudantil publicados pela universidade, pois os editais analisados destacam que é permitida somente a participação dos estudantes dos cursos regulares presenciais da instituição. Conclusão: Conclui-se que a incorporação da EAD pelas IPES, via sistema UAB, causa a flexibilização das estruturas acadêmicas, o que pode impactar no processo de ensino e aprendizagem da universidade pública, promovendo o esvaziamento da formação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Universidade Aberta do Brasil. Flexibilização Institucional. Universidade Federal do Pará.

El sistema UAB y la universidad flexible: el caso de la UFPA

RESUMEN

Introducción: La oferta de cursos de pregrado a distancia, a través de la Universidad Abierta de Brasil (UAB) en las Instituciones Públicas de Educación Superior (IPES), produce cambios en la organización institucional de las universidades, que reverberan en la flexibilización de la función de docencia, investigación y extensión de enseñanza superior. Objetivos: Este artículo tiene como objetivo investigar la inserción de la UAB en la Universidad Federal de Pará (UFPA) y qué reverberaciones ha tenido ese sistema para la educación universitaria. Metodología: La investigación tiene un abordaje cualitativo, con el uso de investigación documental para el análisis de datos. Los datos fueron recopilados a través de documentos oficiales publicados por la propia UFPA: Proyectos Pedagógicos de sus cursos de EAD y convocatorias ayudas económicas, presentes en el sitio web del Sistema de Gestión de Acción Social (SIGAEST), de 2013 a 2022. Resultados: Los resultados revelan cómo se ha debilitado el triple rol de docencia, investigación y extensión en el ámbito de la oferta de grado de EAD/UAB, debido a que los Proyectos Pedagógicos no están alineados con las regulaciones de la UFPA sobre la investigación y la extensión. Los estudiantes de EAd/UAB no están incluidos en las diferentes convocatorias de ayudas económicas que publica la universidad. Conclusión: Concluye que la incorporación de la EAD a las IPES, a través del sistema de la UAB, provoca la flexibilización de las estructuras académicas, lo que puede impactar los procesos de enseñanza y aprendizaje en el ámbito de la universidad pública.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Universidad Abierta de Brasil. Flexibilización institucional. Universidad Federal de Pará.

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Introduction

To discuss the transformations in public education policies, it is necessary to consider the ideological changes associated with the reforms of the state and the redefinition of its priorities to meet the requirements of the political, ideological, economic, and cultural model adopted at each time (HÖFLING, 2001). According to Silva Júnior and Sguissardi (2013), the consolidation of financial capitalism throughout the twentieth century, the transformations of production processes and the narrowing of the relationship between capital and labor have promoted the growth of a state increasingly subordinated to the demands of the market and less concerned with social policies.

In discussing the demands of a globalized education market, Segenreich and Castro (2012, p. 90) point to a major challenge for higher education in this context, that of "reconciling the demands of quality and innovation with the need to expand access and reduce social asymmetries." During the urgent scenario for the restructuring of the educational system, with the aim of inserting the university in the technical-scientific progress, the Distance Education (DE) has gained a prominent role, so that the policies for the expansion of the vacancies in the higher education have been strengthened through it.

In Brazil, the federal government has bet on this modality as a strategy, which is why, in 2006, it regulated the Open University of Brazil (OUB) system, a government program to offer courses in DE mode through a partnership between the federal government, public higher education institutions (PHEIs) and state and municipal governments. The offer of DE courses in PHEIs is materialized through notices published by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), which provide for the financial subsidy for the payment of employees and for the realization of academic activities.

One aspect that deserves attention is the way in which the financing of the OUB system is organized, as explained in its founding decree:

Art.6 The expenses of the OUB System will be borne by the budget appropriations annually allocated to the Ministry of Education and the National Fund for the Development of Education - NFDE, and the Executive Branch must make the selection of higher education courses and programs compatible with the existing budget appropriations, observing the limits of movement and commitment and payment of the budgetary and financial programming (BRASIL, 2006).

This means that there are no regular budget subsidies for the implementation of DE via OUB. Since it operates in the form of a government program, the system is subject to external guidelines and fits into the pedagogical models defined by the Distance Education Directorate (DED) of Capes and other sectors of the Ministry of Education (MEC). According to Arruda and Arruda (2015), one of the problems arising from the non-integration of DE in the resources of PHEI is that students of this modality do not have all the rights of students - the National Student Assistance Plan (NSAP) itself does not indicate in its

regulation any financial support for them. It is not integrated in the research and extension policies of the university.

The incorporation of the OUB system into the PHEI has meant changes in the organization of the latter, since, despite being presented as a public policy aimed at increasing the number of vacancies in higher education, the funding of the is not included in the budget matrix of the public institutions that incorporate this system, which generates changes in the relationship between the university and the state. In this new configuration, "the State moves from the condition of maintainer to the condition of formulator of objectives conceived outside the institutional spaces of the university" (GOULART; SILVA; FERREIRA, 2016, p. 25).

Against this background, the central objective of this article is to study the implementation of the OUB system at the Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA¹) and the repercussions of this system for university education, especially with regard to the organizational flexibilization imposed by its financing model. Thus, we start from a concept of flexibilization of the public university, very well expressed by Chauí (2003), which characterizes it through: administrative and political decentralization; replacement of public tenders of exclusive dedication by flexible and precarious contracts; separation of teaching and research; adaptation of undergraduate and graduate curricula to the demands of the labor market; facilitation of training and greater expansion at lower cost.

This research is qualitative in nature, which, according to Godoy (1995, p. 62), "has as its fundamental concern the study and analysis of the empirical world in its natural environment". In addition, documentary analysis was conducted, starting with documentary sources, defined by Gil (1999, p. 169) as "any written record that can be used as a source of information. Regulations, minutes of meetings, attendance books, reports, files, opinions, etc.". The documentary sources were selected considering their relevance and credibility, documents published by federal educational agencies, such as MEC and Capes, such as national surveys with OUB students, called *Student Survey 2017 and Pilot Project Registration of Students of the OUB System*. In addition, institutional documents approved and disseminated within the UFPA were used in the analysis, such as Statutes, Resolutions, Pedagogical Projects of DE Courses of the University and Notices of Student Support published from 2013 to 2022.

UFPA and the insertion of the OUB system in the university

UFPA is a federal public institution, created by Law No. 3,191, on July 2, 1957, and is "located in a region that is the depository of natural and cultural resources that are extremely

¹ This study presents partial results of the research developed in the Graduate Program in Education (PPGED) of the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), with funding from Capes.

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strategic for the development of the world economy and society in this new century" (CAMARGO et al., 2011, p. 146). It has its headquarters in Belém and has a university population of 58,478 students, with 12 campuses in the municipalities of Pará: Abaetetuba, Altamira, Ananindeua, Belém, Bragança, Breves, Cametá, Capanema, Castanhal, Salinópolis, Soure and Tucuruí.

Currently, UFPA is a federal higher education autarchy, linked to MEC, through the Secretariat of Higher Education (SESU). In this direction, the UFPA Statute points out, as one of its purposes:

[...] cooperate for regional, national, and international development, establishing itself as technical and scientific support of excellence in meeting services of community interest and socio-political-cultural demands for an economically viable, environmentally safe, and socially just Amazon (UFPA, 2006a, p. 1, art. 3, III).

As an educational institution, the UFPA emerged in the government of Juscelino Kubitschek (1956-1961), in a context of stimulating developmentalist policies and nationalism, at a time when universities were trying to adapt to the logic of industrial development, contributing to the training of qualified workers for the market and to the modernization process of the country, becoming a reference at the international level (RIBEIRO, 2013).

The history of DE at UFPA began in the 1990s, amid the scenario of state reforms and consolidation of neoliberal policies, when the government encouraged universities to seek strategies to ensure their economic and social sustainability (MANCEBO, 1998). In this context, the Dean of Education of the UFPA, Maria Cândida Mendes Forte (1989-1993), visited the Open University of Venezuela and was impressed by the distance education developed there. Thus, the rector returned from her trip determined to bet on distance education as a modality for the expansion of vacancies in the Amazonian reality (LEITE et al., 2010).

The UFPA was one of the first universities to be accredited by the MEC. The initial interest was to offer the mathematics course at a distance, for two main reasons: the high demand for teacher training in exact and natural sciences, and the probable "facility" of implementation since mathematics would have a more universal language in relation to other disciplines. However, the course was interrupted because of pedagogical difficulties, since it was based on the material offered by the Open University of England, which had cultural and historical characteristics different from the Amazonian reality, and because of budgetary problems, due to delays in university funding (LEITE et al., 2010).

In 1999, the Distance Education Program at UFPA was approved, being subordinated to the Pro-Rectory of Teaching and Graduation (PRTG). In 2002, the Program underwent changes with the creation of the Special Secretariat for Distance Education (SSDE), which was linked to the Rectorate of the university. However, the realization of a policy for distance education only occurred after the publication of the UFPA Statute in 2003, with the creation

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of the Distance Education Advisory (DEA), whose function was "to coordinate and provide the necessary support to the projects in execution and to negotiate new projects, with the coparticipation of the executing academic units and the end pro-rectories" (ELIASQUEVICI; FONSECA, 2009, p. 33).

One of the milestones of the expansion policy of DE courses at UFPA was the publication of Resolution No. 3,712, of May 21, 2008, approved by CONSEPE, which provides guidelines for the provision of distance courses and activities. The document presents, in its article 2, the general principles of distance education in the institution, which are:

- I social inclusion, by expanding access to academic knowledge in different municipalities, aiming at reducing social inequalities, primarily in the State of Pará and in the Amazon Region.
- II offering quality education, capable of providing intellectual, social, and economic emancipation (UFPA, 2008, p. 1).

Under these circumstances, the OUB system entered the UFPA in 2008, through the recognition of the distance modality, supported by the normative considerations mentioned above. As Leite points out, the UFPA higher administration has always made clear the desire to expand public higher education in the Pará scenario through the distance modality. Proponents of the modality argued that the success of DE would depend, first, on the universalization of virtual spaces and, second, on the students themselves, who "would study autonomously, seeking motivations within themselves; they would have to have basic notions of Internet access and know their own pace of learning" (LEITE, 2019, p. 13).

Thus, since 2008, OUB has been the program responsible for offering undergraduate distance learning courses at UFPA. In 2017, AEDI underwent a reformulation and through Resolution No. 760, it became the Center for Innovation in Technologies Applied to Teaching and Extension (TATE²). With this, TATE² took over the management and organization of distance education within the University, presenting the following academic-administrative structure: Deliberative Collegiate; Direction; Executive Secretariat; Academic Subunits; Coordination of Distance Education; Coordination of Applied Research and Extension; Coordination of Innovation in Technologies Applied to Teaching and Extension; Coordination of Strategic Actions and Fundraising; Administrative Coordination (UFPA, 2017).

Currently, the undergraduate distance learning courses offered by UFPA are Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration; Bachelor's Degree in Library Science; Bachelor's Degree in Physics; Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry; Bachelor's Degree in Letters (Portuguese); Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences; Integrated Degree in Sciences, Mathematics and Languages; and Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics. These courses are distributed in the following municipalities: Ananindeua, Baião, Barcarena, Breves, Bujaru, Cachoeira do Arari, Cametá, Canaã dos Carajás, Capitão Poço, Goianésia, Igarapé-Miri, Jacundá, Marabá, Muaná, Paragominas, Ponta de Pedras, Salinópolis, São Sebastião da Boa

Vista and Tailândia (BRASIL, [202-]²).

However, the entry of the OUB into the UFPA, in 2008, meant new institutional arrangements, linked to an instrumental rationality for the formation of a new professional profile, since "the OUB does not even represent a university in the full sense of the term, therefore it does not adhere to the principles of a true university, namely: research and extension" (AUTHOR, year). Despite the inclusive character presented in the proposal to create the OUB system, it is important to identify the contradictions present in this supposed democratization.

One of the contradictions is that the system is structured within the logic of capital and understands the state only as a mere regulator of educational policy, this is clear in the very organization of the system, whose management is done in a shared way between the federated entities. In the organization of the OUB system, the municipalities function as responsible for the infrastructure and maintenance of the pole, which is contrary to the LDB/96 itself, when the law establishes that higher education is the responsibility of the Union. In other words, this new institutional arrangement reinforces the process of decentralization of education as a public good, a symbolic feature of the state reform (SEGENREICH; CASTRO, 2012).

Another contradictory aspect of the incorporation of the OUB system into the university is the cooperation agreement signed between OUB and the private support foundations, which manage the resources sent by the capes. In the case of UFPA, the agreement is signed with the Foundation for the Support and Development of Research (FFSDR), which is responsible for the contract of human resources (administrative staff and IT), the payment of tickets and per diems for the transfer of employees to the face-to-face centers, the purchase of office supplies, and so on. According to Chaves (2006, p. 65), the problem lies in the Foundation's own relationship with the University, since "the Foundation's logic is mercantilist and its performance within the University represents a way of thinking about education as a service and as an object to be bought and sold, that is, as a commodity.

It should be noted that not all the teachers who work in distance learning courses are permanent PEHE teachers. The payment of non-staff teachers is made by means of stipends paid by Capes, without any employment relationship with the University, the value of which is defined according to the title and function that the teacher occupies in the course, while the payment of administrative and technological support professionals is made through service contracts or through the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLL).

The change in labor relations promoted by the incorporation of the OUB system into the PEHE is compatible with the educational proposals described in the Master Plan for the Reform of the State Apparatus (MPRSA, which advocates the organization of a more flexible

² The information is available in the Electronic System of the Open University of Brazil (SisUAB), which is an internal management platform of the UAB system, where it is possible to access information in the public domain, such as the map that makes it possible to identify the IPES and Poles members of the UAB system distributed in the national territory (BRASIL, [202-]).

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and less bureaucratic public administration. According to Goulart, Silva and Ferreira (2016), the temporary jobs established by the OUB system generate instability, temporality, low remuneration and the impossibility of accounting for time spent on work production.

It can be noted, therefore, that the education model offered by the OUB system is structurally characterized by results-based management, developed under the logic of public notices and service contracts, which aims at the highest cost-benefit ratio and, consequently, does not prioritize the association of teaching with research and extension, as we will see below.

The OUB system and the flexibilization of the public university

The Federal Constitution of 1988 establishes in Art. 207, states that public universities must follow the "principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension" (BRASIL, 1988). In this perspective, according to the reflections of Sleutjes (1999), the transformations of the contemporary world led us to rethink the role and the values of the university. In this regard, the author emphasizes the importance of the relationship between teaching, research and extension, since it constitutes the essence of the university's activity, i.e. "if teaching is separated from research and extension, the university will be weakened, since teaching and research are elements that concretely increase the production of knowledge" (SLEUTJES, 1999, p. 110).

In the wake of this discussion, Chauí (1999) refers to the reform of the state apparatus, which began to consider public services and institutions as social organizations, and explains that by submitting its structure to the model of social organization, the university - until then understood as a social institution - is guided by productivity indexes and strategies of organizational effectiveness. Given this scenario, the public university changes its social function, because it is part of a movement of commercialization of its services, in order to meet the direct and indirect demands of neoliberal policies that begin to guide its institutional, budgetary, pedagogical and cultural actions (CHAUÍ, 1999; MANCEBO; SILVA JÚNIOR; OLIVEIRA, 2018).

We must emphasize that the political project that originates this body of structural reforms for capital, which acquired solidity from the management of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), is a national political project, guided by a global agenda of reforms of the state and its republican institutions (BRASIL, 1995), which produced a new identity for the public university, under the mediation of a new conception of management, with aspects based both on the reduction of the financial capacity of the state in public investments and on the search for new mechanisms of financial management autonomy for universities.

As consequences of the State Reform for public universities, Silva Júnior and Sguissardi (2012) point out: the emphasis on applied research; the lightening of

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undergraduate courses, offered in educational modalities based on information and communication technologies; and the loss of autonomy and the closer relationship between the university and the business sector. According to Mancebo (1998), the Reform also led to the flexibilization of management and diversification of the system, i.e., it was intended to increase the number of places in higher education at the lowest possible cost, which presupposes the discrediting of the research university model and the flexibilization of the teaching-research-extension tripod.

In addition, Minto (2008) points out that the incentive to diversify teaching models is a discourse coated with modernization of higher education, but which intends to:

[...] on the one hand, to meet the demands of the productive sector (university-company integration), adapting the contents taught and the research carried out in the so-called 'centers of excellence'; on the other hand, to meet the new service bourgeoisie, which wishes to offer nothing but low-cost education, unconcerned with quality and free of government controls. Two essential and unavoidable demands arise from this trend for entrepreneurs in general: to break the model of inseparability between teaching, research, and extension, and to encourage new forms of training and research, such as short courses, distance learning, technological teaching aimed at 'emerging professions', 'applied' research, etc. It is therefore a matter of promoting a double 'flexibilization': of the institutions themselves and of the relationship between them (MINTO, 2008, p. 1248, emphasis added).

In this perspective, it is observed that OUB is a program that offers distance learning undergraduate courses at universities, but that, because it is a system that works in articulation with different institutions, it does not have as the basis of its organization the teaching-research-extension tripod, which encompasses the three fundamental pillars of the public university. It is known that the OUB system was structured to respond to a specific demand - the initial training of teachers for basic education, especially to achieve the goals established in the PNE (2001-2010). However, for the public university, this meant "the reduction of its functions, prioritizing teaching, to the detriment of the inseparability between teaching, research and extension" (MANCEBO; SILVA JÚNIOR; OLIVEIRA, 2018, p. 6).

Regarding this issue, Arruda and Arruda (2015, p. 333-334) explain that:

The DE student, because of coming from a government program, such as the OUB system, is not integrated into research and extension policies and, therefore, does not experience complete university experiences. ODL, in this perspective, instead of representing the expansion of equal opportunities for access to Higher Education, ends up recrudescing the intrinsic characteristics of capitalism, in its assumption of economic distinction and in the fetish of merchandise as a producer of meanings and socializations, in a clear movement of devaluation of the human against the technical.

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fetish of merchandise as a producer of meanings and socializations, in a clear movement of devaluation of the human against the technical.

Art. 3 The PNAES should be implemented in an articulated manner with teaching, research, and extension activities, aiming to assist students regularly enrolled in **face-to-face undergraduate courses** at federal higher education institutions (BRASIL, 2010, emphasis added).

In view of the aspect addressed, we consider it important to analyze the research that presents the national context of how the participation of OUB students in teaching-research-extension activities takes place. On the MEC website, a newsletter called Student Survey 2017 is available, which presents the systematized result of the answers to questionnaires applied with students of the OUB system throughout Brazil in January/2017 by DED/Capes.

Among the questions present in the questionnaire, the following is included: "Do you carry out activities in pedagogical laboratories compatible with the needs of the course?". The following graph shows the students' response.

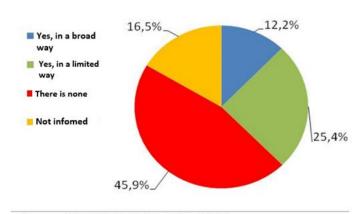


Figure 1. OUB students' response about activities in laboratories

Source: MEC/CAPES (BRASIL, 2017).

Thus for 45.9% of students, there were no activities in laboratories compatible with the needs of the course; another 25.4% indicated that there were, but to a limited extent. This indicator presents one of the main factors to be improved, according to the view of the 46,459 students who completed the survey. This survey also asked students about the "Role of the Institution in relation to their participation in Scientific Congresses and Seminars?".

As shown in the figure below, 55.7% of students stated that there was dissemination or encouragement to participate in such activities; another 42.3% pointed out that there was no encouragement; and 5.9% stated that there was encouragement, but they were not interested.

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42,3
30,4
25,3
1,7

Published Encouraged Offers support No stimulation R\$ was stimulus but no interest

Figure 2. Role of HEIs in participation in conferences and seminars

Source: MEC/CAPES (BRASIL, 2017).

Another national survey was the *Pilot Project Registration of OUB System Students*, prepared by DED/Capes in 2019. In this survey, 12,984 questionnaires were applied between October 2018 and January 2019, with the aim of tracing the socioeconomic profile of students who are members of the OUB system. An important fact revealed in this document is presented below:

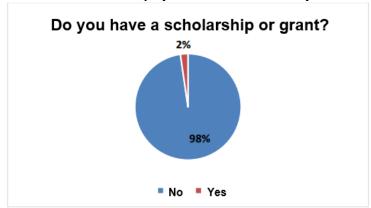


Figure 3. Use of aid or scholarship by students of the UAB System - 2019

Source: MEC/CAPES (BRASIL, 2019).

In view of the data presented on the access to aid or scholarships of OUB students, only 2% - that is, about 6 students of the total sample of questionnaires answered (298) - declared having some type of aid or scholarship in the performance of their academic activities.

Therefore, the results of the questionnaires applied to students from different PEHE in the country reflect the low participation of OUB students in practical activities in the laboratory, in scientific congresses and seminars, and in the use of aid or scholarship. This disagrees with the principle, attributed to the university, of inseparability between teaching, research, and extension, established by the Federal Constitution of 1988. In view of this finding, we will analyze in the next section the reality of OUB students at UFPA about the

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teaching-research-extension tripod.

New institutional arrangements in the context of UFPA

Within the scope of UFPA, its Statute determines, in its Art. 54, that the integration between teaching, research and extension will take place through "institutional support programs, partnerships with national and foreign agents, with a view to the development of cultural, scientific and technological research" (UFPA, 2006a, p. 14). Similarly, Resolution No. 3.712/2008, previously cited, which established the guidelines for the provision of distance courses at UFPA, signals that:

Art. 7 The curricular organization of the courses has the following assumptions: I quality training, with obedience to the guidelines and precepts of national and UFPA legislation for teaching; **II** - articulation of teaching, research and extension, guaranteeing a technical-scientific training consistent with the demands of the contemporary world of work (UFPA, 2008, p. 2, emphasis added).

Also, Resolution No. 760/2017, which created NITAE², establishes:

Sole paragraph. To achieve its general objective and its specific objectives, the Center must comply with the Teaching, Research and Extension policy, as provided for in Resolution no. 761 - CONSUN, of 20.10.2017 - Annex 4 Statute and in the General Regulations of UFPA, in line with the guidelines of the pedagogical projects of its Academic Subunit (s) and its Coordinators, through an annual program established by the Congregation of the Academic Unit (UFPA, 2017, p. 3, emphasis added).

In this perspective, considering what was recommended in the Resolution, the Pedagogical Projects of the Courses (PPC) of distance graduation of UFPA were analyzed, with the purpose of verifying how these projects address the teaching-research-extension tripod.

Chart 1. The teaching-research-extension tripod in the Pedagogical Projects of UFPA's distance learning courses.

Course	Year of creation of the PPC	The teaching-research-extension tripod in the PPC
Bachelor of Public Administration Distance Learning	2010	4.7 ARTICULATION OF TEACHING WITH RESEARCH AND EXTENSION: Among the academic activities that give rise to research and extension practices are the ST and the Supervised Curricular Internship. The ST, whose workloads total 240 hours, enable the transversality of the contents through research and the articulation of academic activities with the needs of the State and society. To ensure extension activities, these seminars will be used for the development of projects, courses, lectures, workshops, in short, events that favor areas such as education, environment, health, human rights, job creation and income expansion (UFPA, 2010, p. 29, emphasis added).
Bachelor of Library Science Distance	2018	9 COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES: fulfilled through participation in academic, scientific, and professional seminars and events; research , teaching , extension , and technological innovation projects; research

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Learning		groups; technical visits; among others. The following can be recognized
		as complementary activities: monitoring in the disciplines of the Librarianship Course; participation in institutional research and projects ; participation in scientific and professional events in Librarianship or related, such as congresses, seminars, conferences, and lectures (UFPA, 2018a, p. 62, emphasis added).
Degree in Physics at a Distance	2012	7.5 ARTICULATION OF TEACHING WITH RESEARCH AND EXTENSION: Extension activities, based on the principle of integration between teaching-research-extension, will be associated with the various programs developed in the training processes in Academic Activities, participation in projects, courses and short courses and events with an Extension character with Society (UFPA, 2012, p. 24)
Degree in Biological Sciences Distance Learning-Semi presential	2020	5. 4 COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES: Complementary Activities are considered: - Participation in research, teaching and / or extension projects, under teacher guidance, as a volunteer or scholarship intern for a minimum period of one semester; - Participation in the DE Project: Methodological strategies in teaching, research and extension applied in Biological Sciences Modality distance learning, in the activities of project elaboration and research development, with a favorable opinion from the advisor; - Participation in scientific and cultural events such as congresses, meetings, symposia, seminars, conferences, meetings and the like, at the local, regional, national and international levels (UFPA, 2020, p. 16, emphasis added). 16, emphasis added)
Degree in Languages at a Distance	2007	1.14.9 THE COURSE STRUCTURE The resolution of contextualized problem situations and the construction and development of intervention projects presuppose the integration of research and extension into teaching activities. The planning and development of intervention projects to be developed in the supervised internship should be based on investigative practices on pedagogical work and the dynamics of the school where the supervised internship is based. In addition, the construction of intervention projects involves bibliographic research, selection of pedagogical material that implies systematic investigative procedures that should not be neglected. Intervention projects should provide not only for class regency, but also for extension activities aimed at the teaching staff of the school where the supervised internship is based, as well as for the community where the school operates (UFPA, 2007, p. 41, emphasis added).
Integrated Degree in Science, Mathematics and Languages	2018	7. ARTICULATION BETWEEN TEACHING, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION In the Integrated Degree, articulation between teaching, research and extension is foreseen from the first semester of the course. Students will be guided to conduct research on school problems and realities, to offer workshops and thematic seminars to teachers of the initial years, in the various pedagogical activities that make up the curricular proposal of the course (UFPA, 2018b, p. 48, emphasis added).
Degree in Mathematics at a Distance	2005	Does not mention the teaching-research-extension tripod
Chemistry Degree Distance Learning	2006	9 - TEACHING- RESEARCH-EXTENSION INTEGRATION: Students must complete at least 200 hours of other activities, which are described below. Characteristics of complementary activities: This workload must be fully conducted with research and extension activities, such as participation in scientific events, participation in research projects, participation in laboratory activities (initiation to teaching), participation in extension courses, including educational interventions in secondary and elementary schools (UFPA, 2006b, p.30, emphasis added).

Source: Prepared by the authors based on UFPA (2005, 2006b, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2018, 2020).

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The analysis of the Pedagogical Projects of the courses allowed us to identify that the approach to the teaching-research-extension tripod is mostly concentrated in the field of Curricular Internship experiences and Thematic Seminars. Thus, according to the projects, research and extension are worked in the context of the school, a space where students can develop intervention projects based on investigative practices. In addition, research and extension are also considered in the items that correspond to complementary activities, in which students need to fulfill a minimum workload of extracurricular activities to complete the academic record, such as: participation in scientific events, lectures, seminars, courses and workshops.

The guidelines described in the PPCs indicate the bureaucratic character attributed to teaching, research, and extension, since, in the documents, the tripod is linked to a mandatory discipline of the curriculum (internship) and to the fulfillment of complementary activities, also mandatory in undergraduate courses. Therefore, it was not verified the incentive to scientific production and publication, participation in research projects as a volunteer or scientific initiation fellow, involvement with programs and actions integrated with public administration and civil society entities, as determined by Resolution No. 3,043/2003, which provides for research activities, and Resolution No. 3,298/2005, which provides for extension activities, within the scope of UFPA (UFPA, 2003, 2005).

In this sense, Arruda and Arruda (2015, p 334) signal that DE is characterized as an emergency expansion policy, thus:

Distance education, therefore, does not constitute democratization of education if it does not contain clear guidelines regarding the dimensions of quality and recognition of the specificities of its students, since, from a political point of view, it is recommended to internalize education and expand access to the population. It happens that the population served by distance education is usually the neediest, farthest from large urban centers, the most solid formations, and the most experienced teachers, since most professionals direct their activities to cities located in metropolitan regions.

In the aegis of this discussion, seeking to analyze the participation of students from the OUB system of UFPA in the teaching-research-extension activities offered by the university, a survey was carried out in the Student Assistance Management System (SAMS) in the period from 2013 to 2022, considering that this is the time frame available on the website (UFPA, [202-]) for public access to the notices published by the Superintendence of Student Assistance (SAEST).

The research revealed that OUB students are not included in different student assistance and pedagogical support programs at UFPA. This is because the normative notices/instructions emphasize that students must be regularly enrolled in UFPA's face-to-face undergraduate courses, in the extensive (regular) modality.

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Table 1. UFPA Normative Notices/Instructions that do not include OUB students (2013-2022).

Aid/Scholarship/Program	Edital/Year
Academic travel assistance	Editorial nº 22/2014/PROEX/UFPA
Project for Access to Foreign Languages -	Editorial n°02//2017/SAEST/UFPA
PROLÍNGUAS	Editorial nº 01/2018 SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 01/2019 SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 01/2020 SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial n°02/2021/SAEST/UFPA
Learning Accompaniment Project	Editorial nº 12/2021/SAEST/UFPA
PD Aid	Editorial nº 08/2021/SAEST/UFPA
Permanence/Housing Aid	Editorial nº 02/2014/PROEX/UFPA
•	Editorial n° 02/2017/SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 02/2018/SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial n° 02/2019/SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 02/2020 SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 09/2021 SAEST/UFPA
Housing aid for Indigenous, quilombo and traditional	Editorial nº 08/2017/SAEST/UFPA
population students	Editorial nº 03/2018/SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 03/2019/SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 03/2020 SAEST/UFPA
	Editorial nº 05/2021 SAEST/UFPA
Emergency aid to support digital inclusion - CHIP	Editorial nº 10/2020 SAEST/UFPA
Aid Assistive Technology Kit for PD	Normative Instruction
	n°16/2022/SAEST/UFPA
Academic Accessibility Scholarship/PD - (PROBAC)	Normative Instruction
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	n° 17/2022/SAEST/UFPA
Digital Inclusion Support Program	Editorial nº 10/2020/SAEST/UFPA
Pedagogical Support	Normative Instruction
	n°19/2022SAEST/UFPA

Source: Prepared by the authors

It is important to emphasize that the notices of UFPA's distance courses provide for vacancies for People with Disabilities (PD). In the DE/UFPA 2021-3 selection process, "628 (six hundred and twenty-eight) vacancies were offered, distributed as follows: 601 (six hundred and one) vacancies for quota and/or broad competition candidates and 27 (twenty-seven) vacancies for People with Disabilities (PD)" (UFPA, 2021). However, as shown in the previous table, the documents that regulate PD Aid, Assistive Technology Kit Aid and the Academic Accessibility Scholarship do not include undergraduate students in the distance learning modality.

In addition to the aids and scholarships mentioned in Table 1, the participation of OUB students is made impossible in programs such as Pedagogical Residency, Monitoring Program, Tutorial Education Program (TEP), Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID) and Scientific Initiation Scholarships (PIBIC), since the notices of these programs require, as criteria for student participation, the fulfillment of face-to-face workload. In addition, the vacancies offered in these programs are linked to one of the 12 university campuses of UFPA, however, the students of the OUB system are linked to the face-to-face support pole of the municipality where the distance learning courses were offered, locations in which, for the most part, there is no university campus.

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Final considerations

It is necessary to be clear about the repercussions and delineations created from the implementation of ODL in public universities. Thus, the following questions are necessary: why is distance education, through OUB, used as a proposal to expand higher education for historically excluded classes? What is the pedagogical conception of education and human formation that accompanies the offer of distance learning undergraduate courses via OUB? In this sense, this concern is in line with the reflections of Silva Júnior and Sguissardi (2012) when they discuss the forms and reasons for the expansion of higher education, stating that the expansion movement through distance education unfolds under two aspects: the strengthening of the commodification of knowledge and mass certification in the context of higher education.

The investigation into the participation of OUB/UFPA students in the selection of scholarships, aid and programs of the institution showed the flexibility of the teaching-research-extension tripod, while the analysis of the Pedagogical Projects of the university's distance learning courses showed the bureaucratic character attributed to research and extension. The analysis of the notices in SAMS (2013-2022) revealed the marginalization of students in UFPA's distance learning undergraduate courses, who in addition to being unassisted in terms of aid and scholarships, are also unable to participate in programs to encourage teaching, research, and extension.

In view of the discussion on the incorporation of distance education into the public university via the OUB system, it is concluded that its financing, linked to public notices, causes ruptures with the organizational culture of the public university, which can impact the quality of the teaching and learning process, and contribute to the emptying of training. Thus, it is understood that the offer of vacancies in distance courses by the OUB system in PEHE, instead of democratizing education for an excluded portion of society, can only change the way this exclusion occurs. Therefore, the study on the incorporation of distance education to the public university in the OUB system is fundamental for a critical analysis of this system, whose configuration meets the current requirements of capitalist accumulation and restructuring of the State.

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