DISTANCE EDUCATION AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

MARCH 25, 2013 WORKSHOP

LOS ANGELES TRADE-TECH
A Community College
KEY ACCJC DOCUMENTS

Pertaining to Distance and Correspondence Education

- ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education
- Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education 2012
- Guide to Evaluating Institutions
- Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness
DEFINITION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance Education means [34 CFR §602.3]:

Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

(1) the internet;

(2) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;

(3) audioconferencing; or

(4) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).
APPROPRIATENESS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEFINITION

34 CFR§602.17 (g). The accrediting agency must apply the definitions of distance education and correspondence education to determine the mode being employed.
DISTANCE AND CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION

DISTANCE EDUCATION

► Instruction delivered to students who are separated from the instructor
► Regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor
► May use internet, one- or two-way transmissions, a/v conferencing, DVDs or CD-ROMs

CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION

► Instructional material provided by mail or electronic transmission (including exams) to students who are separated from instructor
► Limited interaction between students and the instructor and primarily initiated by students
► A course that is typically self-paced

34 CFR§602.3 (Definition)
APPROPRIATENESS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEFINITION

The accrediting commission must determine whether instruction offered with students separated from the instructor is:

- the electronic equivalent of paperwork and reading (CE)
- required to, and does, regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included in the grade (DE)

Discussion – how does the commission determine this?

34 CFR§602.19 (a-e). The accrediting agency has and effectively applies monitoring and evaluation approaches.
55204. Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

(a) Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.
ACCJC DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY ELEMENTS

- Relationship to College Mission
- Evaluation of Courses
- Learning Outcomes
- Provides Resources and Structure to Accomplish Outcomes
- Advance Notice of Intent to Initiate DE
- Advance Notice of Intent to Offer 50% or More Courses in a Program via DE
- Student Authentication Processes in Place
- Policies to Protect Student Privacy
Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education

Version 2.0, June 2009

This list of best practice strategies is based on "Institutional Policies/Procedures and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education," produced by WCET in February 2009 and updated in April 2009. In May 2009, the Institutional Technology Council (ITC) surveyed its membership to seek feedback and additional strategies to enhance the WCET work. This June 2009 document reflects the combined contributions of WCET, the UT TeleCampus of the University of Texas System, and ITC. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 United States License.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT

1. Establish a campus-wide policy on academic integrity that articulates faculty and student responsibilities.
2. Demonstrate an institutional commitment to enforcing the policy and in supporting faculty and staff in the handling of academic integrity matters.
3. Make information on academic integrity easily to find on the campus Web site, library Web site, department Web site, course, within the syllabus and within specific assignments.
4. Include ethics instruction within the core curriculum and/or area-specific within degree plans.
5. Address academic integrity at student orientation programs and events.
6. Encourage faculty to report any suspected violation and act upon it.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. State the academic integrity/academic honesty policy within the online learning environment and discuss it early in the course.
2. Require student engagement with the academic integrity policy. For example:
   a. Ask students for their input on how to create a community of integrity at the start of the course. This establishes the students as stakeholders in the community and the process of its formation.
   b. Develop and ask students to commit to a class honor code.
   c. Require students to read and sign an agreement to the campus academic integrity policy.
   d. Write a letter to students about integrity and post it in the course.
   e. Ask students to review the academic integrity policy (this can also be used as a writing example to see when grading and reviewing student work).
   f. Ask students to reflect on the academic integrity policy in the discussion board.
   g. Include a lesson on avoiding plagiarism.
3. Have assignments and activities in which appropriate sharing and collaboration is essential to successful completion. Foster a community of integrity by choosing authentic learning tasks that require group cohesiveness and effort. For example, focus assignments on distinctive, individual, and non-comprehensive tasks or on what individual students self-identify as their personal learning needs.
4. Provide students with a course or course lesson...
HOW ACCREDITATION TEAMS ASSESS IF STANDARDS ARE BEING MET

► Same standards apply to on-campus and distance education courses: mission/effectiveness, student learning programs and services, resources, and leadership and governance.

► College must demonstrate how standards are met in distance education mode
  • Standards are set through college policies (robust dialogue)
  • Practices are implemented in accordance with policies
  • Policies and practices are routinely evaluated and adjustments are made as necessary
Is there a **policy** that defines “**regular and substantive interactions**” for DE courses? (34 C.F.R. § 602.3.)

Does the institution have a **policy** on **academic freedom**? How is this policy implemented and monitored in DE/CE courses and programs?

Does the institution have a college-wide **policy** on **academic honesty**? Does the policy address issues on academic honesty, including verification of student identity, in relation to registration for, participation in, and completion of DE/CE?

What **mechanisms** does the institution have for informing students and faculty about, and enforcing, its policies on academic honesty, including in DE/CE courses and programs? Does the policy appropriately ensure the **protection of student privacy** in the verification process?
Is there a **policy** that defines “**regular and substantive interactions**” for DE courses? (34 C.F.R. § 602.3.)

Does the institution have a **policy** on **academic freedom**? How is this policy implemented and monitored in DE/CE courses and programs?

Does the institution have a college-wide **policy** on **academic honesty**? Does the policy address issues on academic honesty, including verification of student identity, in relation to registration for, participation in, and completion of DE/CE?

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# Distance Education Policies

## Federal and Accreditation Standards
- Student Authentication
- Academic Freedom
- Academic Honesty
- Protection of Student Privacy

## State Regulations
- Definition and Application of Distance Education
- Separate Course Approval
- Faculty Selection and Workload

- Quality Standards (consistent)
- Regular and effective contact/interaction
DOES THE COLLEGE HAVE THE FOLLOWING FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION?

- Definition and application of distance education
- Commitment to providing resources to support quality distance education
- Student authentication policies and procedures
DOES THE COLLEGE HAVE THE FOLLOWING POLICIES FOR ALL INSTRUCTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES? HOW ARE THEY APPLIED TO FACE-TO-FACE AND DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTRUCTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES?

- Regular, substantive, and effective interaction between faculty and students
- Academic freedom
- Academic honesty
- Protection of student privacy
- Student authentication
- Quality standards related to instruction and support services
- Commitment to providing resources to support quality standards
How do we comply with federal/state regulations and meet accreditation standards in a shared governance and collective bargaining environment?

- Policies/practices must adhere to collective bargaining agreement provisions
- Developing policies and setting standards using the shared governance process...and ensuring there is robust dialogue in the process
ACCREDITATION/DISTANCE EDUCATION RESOURCES

• PowerPoint and handouts from today’s workshop
• ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education
• Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education 2012
• Link to ACCJC Webinar: DE on the Front Burner

Available on the college’s accreditation website under the Presentations & Event tab:
http://college.lattc.edu/accreditation/presentations/