



San Bernardino Community College District
Administrative Procedure
Chapter 4 – Academic Affairs

AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

(Replaces current SBCCD AP 4108)

NOTE: This procedure is legally required if the District has implemented distance education courses. The following language in current SBCCD AP 4108 is consistent with the language that is legally required pursuant to the Title 5 Regulations.

❖ From current SBCCD AP 4108 titled Distributed Education

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education courses is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

The [Chief Instructional Officer] shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

NOTE: Insert local practice here: the following approaches are specifically referenced in the federal regulation as appropriate. The key is to utilize an accepted procedure for verifying a student's identity.

- secure credentialing/login and password;
proctored examinations; or
new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

The District shall utilize secure credentialing/login and password to authenticate or verify the student's identity.

The [Chief Instructional Officer] District Educational Coordinating Committee (DECC) shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process in place to protect student

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45 [privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student](#)
46 [identity, if any, to each student at the time of registration.](#)

47
48 **Definition:** Distributed Education means instruction in which the instructor and student
49 are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication
50 technology.

51
52 **Course Approval:** Each proposed or existing course offered by distributed education
53 shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate approval is mandatory if any
54 portion of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided
55 through distributed education.

56
57 The review and approval of new and existing distributed education courses shall follow
58 the curriculum approval procedures outlined in Administrative ~~Regulation~~ [Procedure](#)
59 4020, Program and Curriculum Development. Distributed education courses shall be
60 approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

61
62 **Certification:** When approving distributed education courses, the Board [of Trustees](#) will
63 certify the following:

- 64
65 • **Course Quality Standards:** The same standards of course quality are applied to
66 the distributed education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.
67
- 68 • **Course Quality Determinations:** Determinations and judgments about the
69 quality of the distributed education course were made with the full involvement of
70 the curriculum committee approval procedures.
71
- 72 • **Instructor Contact:** Each section of the course that is delivered through
73 distributed education will include regular effective contact between instructor and
74 students.
75
- 76 • **Duration of Approval:** All distributed education courses approved under this
77 procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes of the
78 course outline.
79

80 **References:** Title 5, Section [s](#) 55200 et seq.

81 [34 CF Section 602.17 \(U.S. Department of Education regulations on the](#)
82 [Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the](#)
83 [Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended\);](#)
84 [ACCJC Accreditation Standard. II.A.1](#)

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87
88 **NOTE:** The **red ink** signifies language that is **legally required** and recommended by the Policy and
89 Procedure Service and its legal counsel (Liebert Cassidy Whitmore). The language in **black ink** is from
90 the current SBCCD AP 4108 titled Distributed Education approved in 2/09. The language in **blue ink** is
91 included for consideration.

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Approved: 2/09
Revised:

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COMMENTS

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<u>BP or AP #</u>	<u>Representative group</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>	<u>RESPONSE</u>

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Legal Citations for AP 4105

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Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.

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5 CCR § 55200
Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55200

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Title 5. Education
Division 6. California Community Colleges
Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
Article 1. Distance Education

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➔§ 55200. Definition and Application.

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Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. All distance education is subject to the general requirements of this chapter as well as the specific requirements of this article. In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements that may be imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794d).

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Note: Authority cited: Section 66700 and 70901, Education Code; References: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code; title 29 United States Code section 794d, and title 42 United States Code section 12100 et seq.

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5 CCR § 55202
Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55202

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Title 5. Education
Division 6. California Community Colleges
Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
Article 1. Distance Education

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➔§ 55202. Course Quality Standards.

134
135 The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a course
136 conducted through distance education as are applied to traditional classroom
137 courses, in regard to the course quality judgment made pursuant to the
138 requirements of section 55002, and in regard to any local course quality
139 determination or review process. Determinations and judgments about the quality
140 of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full
141 involvement of faculty in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2
142 (commencing with section 53200) of chapter 2.

143
144 Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference:
145 Section 70901, Education Code.

146
147
148 5 CCR § 55204
149 Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55204

150 Title 5. Education
151 Division 6. California Community Colleges
152 Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
153 Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
154 [Article 1.](#) Distance Education

155
156 **➔ § 55204. Instructor Contact.**

157
158 In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established
159 requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

160
161 (a) Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular
162 effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual
163 meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions,
164 field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-
165 mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional
166 matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.

167
168 (b) Any portion of a course provided through distance education is conducted
169 consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the
170 Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

171
172 Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference:
173 Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

174
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176 5 CCR § 55206
177 Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55206

178 Title 5. Education

179 Division 6. California Community Colleges
180 Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
181 Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
182 [¶][Article 1.](#) Distance Education

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184 **➔§ 55206. Separate Course Approval.**

185
186 If any portion of the instruction in a proposed or existing course or course section is
187 designed to be provided through distance education in lieu of face-to-face
188 interaction between instructor and student, the course shall be separately reviewed
189 and approved according to the district's adopted course approval procedures.

190
191 Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference:
192 Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

193
194
195 5 CCR § 55208
196 Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55208

197 Title 5. Education
198 Division 6. California Community Colleges
199 Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
200 Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
201 [¶][Article 1.](#) Distance Education

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203 **➔§ 55208. Faculty Selection and Workload.**

204
205 (a) Instructors of course sections delivered via distance education technology shall
206 be selected by the same procedures used to determine all instructional
207 assignments. Instructors shall possess the minimum qualifications for the discipline
208 into which the course's subject matter most appropriately falls, in accordance with
209 article 2 (commencing with section 53410) of subchapter 4 of chapter 4, and with
210 the list of discipline definitions and requirements adopted by the Board of
211 Governors to implement that article, as such list may be amended from time to
212 time.

213
214 (b) The number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance
215 education shall be determined by and be consistent with other district procedures
216 related to faculty assignment. Procedures for determining the number of students
217 assigned to a course section offered in whole or in part by distance education may
218 include a review by the curriculum committee established pursuant to section
219 55002(a)(1).

220
221 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impinge upon or detract from any
222 negotiations or negotiated agreements between exclusive representatives and
223 district governing boards.

224
225 Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference:
226 Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

227
228
229 5 CCR § 55210
230 Cal. Admin. Code tit. 5, § 55210

231 Title 5. Education
232 Division 6. California Community Colleges
233 Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction
234 Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies
235 [Article 1.](#) Distance Education

236
237 **→§ 55210. Ongoing Responsibility of Districts.**

238
239 If a district offers one or more courses or course sections in which instruction is
240 provided through distance education for at least 51 percent of the hours of
241 instruction in the course or course section, the district shall:

242
243 (a) maintain records and report data through the Chancellor's Office Management
244 Information System on the number of students and faculty participating in new
245 courses or sections of established courses offered through distance education ;

246
247 (b) provide to the local governing board, no later than August 31st of each year, a
248 report on all distance education activity;

249
250 (c) provide other information consistent with reporting guidelines developed by the
251 Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the
252 Board of Governors.

253
254 Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference:
255 Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

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257

258 **FROM WASC Distance Learning Manual**

259 **Introduction**

260 Distance learning is thought by some to be significantly changing American higher
261 education. Today's distance education courses depend on the multitude of
262 constantly changing communication technologies that can transmit instruction and
263 relay materials between learner and teacher.

264 These technologies have taken shape at a mind-boggling pace, erasing traditional
265 barriers of time, space, and place and represent the capacity to fundamentally
266 change the paradigm for transmitting knowledge and skills from master to learner.
267 For reasons of access, economy, effectiveness, and convenience, distance learning

268 has swept higher education and, in the view of some, changed the role of the
269 academy from a cloistered retreat to a marketplace that some institutions would
270 prefer not to enter. Whether one is a zealot for or against distance learning, one
271 cannot escape its impact.
272 Nearly half of the college students in this country are of the age group once thought
273 of as nontraditional. They are adults, most of whom work fulltime, and they are
274 primarily coming to college for many reasons, including economic advancement,
275 accomplishment of educational degree goals, and personal enrichment. Many of
276 these students are attracted by the convenience and flexibility of distance education
277 programs—a perfect fit for their busy lives. They are not alone, however; the
278 evidence indicates that many students of a more "traditional" age find distance
279 learning attractive and that the population of Americans seeking postsecondary
280 education is growing faster than the nation's ability to meet the demand.

281
282 Since the accrediting process serves to validate an institution's commitment to
283 quality assurance and continuous improvement, the purpose of this publication is to
284 provide some assistance to member institutions as they plan and evaluate distance
285 learning programs and since these programs will undergo the same scrutiny
286 employed in the evaluation of conventional campus-based programs, to provide
287 team members with information that aids evaluation. In addition to the policies
288 covered in this manual, users should refer to the Commission's standards as they
289 evaluate distance learning.

290 **Some Current Accreditation Concerns Motivation**

291 The institution should examine closely its motivation for doing distance education
292 since the driving forces behind this effort are many— the potential for increasing
293 enrollment, public pressure, reducing cost, grant monies, opportunities for faculty
294 to be creative, notions that everybody-is-doing-it, and many more. Lack of an
295 identified need for distance learning, whether real or perceived, can influence
296 achievement of institutional understanding of the motives for doing distance
297 education. Understanding institutional motives can drive institutional commitment
298 to the program, an essential matter if students are to be ensured the opportunity to
299 complete educational goals in such a program.

300 **Mission, Educational Programs, and the Curriculum**

301 Distance learning should remain consistent with and central to the stated mission of
302 the institution. The educational policies of the institution regarding distance learning
303 programs should be clearly stated, and the distance learning curriculum should
304 demonstrate appropriate rigor and breadth if degrees or certificates are awarded. If
305 course materials are developed outside the institution, the academic quality of
306 those materials should be assessed via the institution's review policies. Academic
307 standards for all courses and programs should be the same as for all other
308 educational experiences delivered by the institution. Students should be able to
309 move easily from the distance education curriculum to other curricula of the
310 college.

311 **Faculty**

312 Some faculty members will be more interested in distance education than others,
313 and most faculty who engage it will require ongoing training. Because technological
314 currency is important, the level of support for staff development is one indicator of
315 institutional commitment to distance learning. Policies regarding faculty loads, class
316 size, time allowed for course development, and compensation need to be
317 appropriate for the context of distance learning. Faculty access to appropriate
318 technology and software as well as to support personnel is critical to a successful
319 program. On-going evaluation of faculty involved in distance learning should include
320 appropriate recognition of all scholarly activities.

321 **Students**

322 The overriding concern for students is that the delivery of instruction be in modes
323 appropriate for the specific content of a course. Students should expect that
324 distance learning programs will permit completion of learning outcomes and
325 objectives in the same manner as those delivered in traditional programs. The
326 academic and technical skills (as well as the commitment) required to successfully
327 complete such a program should be made clear to students, and since a distance
328 learning environment requires certain skills and competencies to succeed, the
329 institution should have the means to assess whether students have them. Proper
330 training should be available for students in working independently and in utilizing
331 the necessary technology. Access to student services such as admissions,
332 orientation, financial aid, registration, advisement, tutoring, and other appropriate
333 student services and technical support should be made available. Student access to
334 faculty should also be a major program ingredient, and issues about the evaluation
335 of student work should be addressed.

336
337 Access for learning or physically challenged students may pose some special
338 concerns since these students frequently avail themselves of distance learning.
339 These students often will indicate that they would not be likely to be taking courses
340 at all were it not for the availability of such an education.

341
342 The college may need to consider special services or additional equipment for these
343 students.

344 **Library and Learning Resources**

345 Availability and use of appropriate, equivalent, (and sometimes personalized)
346 learning resources are essentials of a supportive and successful distance learning
347 program. Although many of today's institutional libraries are technologically capable
348 of supporting learners at a distance, orientation and training are important
349 components of effective student use of all resources for learning. Special funding
350 may be necessary.

351 **Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes**

352 Although the Commission does not endorse a specific assessment model, providing
353 evidence of institutional effectiveness will require that the institution develop
354 distance learning outcome and assessment strategies. Such strategies should take
355 into account how distance learning programs compare with more traditional
356 programs in such areas as transferability, observable and measurable learning
357 outcomes, eligibility for financial aid, student satisfaction, and other program goals.
358 Review and approval processes should be in place and used to ensure
359 appropriateness of goals and objectives, as well as the effectiveness of distance
360 learning.

361 **Organization, Planning, Human Resources**

362 The college community must understand the connection between the distance
363 learning program and the institution's mission and share the reasons for the
364 program's development. The college should demonstrate commitment to financial
365 and technical support that allows a program to continue for a period of time
366 sufficient for students to complete educational objectives.

367 Those involved with the administration of such programs should provide an
368 appropriate infrastructure and possess skills appropriate to such an Some Current
369 Accreditation Concerns 5 endeavor-especially technological proficiency and the
370 ability to communicate with all constituencies. Planning for the fiscal, technical, and
371 human resources needed to deliver such a program must be thorough and
372 continuous and provide for evaluation on an on-going basis. Evaluation should focus
373 on the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the institution's distance learning
374 program, as well as on assessment of student learning, retention, and satisfaction.

375
376 The institution should also demonstrate preparedness to deal with such problems as
377 computer viruses, hackers, computer crime, etc.
378

379 **Facilities and Equipment**

380 In integrating a distance learning program into the institution's mission, planning
381 for technology-enhanced facilities and equipment appropriate to meeting program
382 or course objectives must be part of long range planning and budgeting activities.
383 The technology should support the program's design, and planning for obsolescence
384 should be evident. Expenditure patterns should demonstrate commitment to
385 providing the resources necessary to ensure success and effectiveness, as well as
386 continuity and integrity of the program.

387 **Catalogs and Publications**

388 As an official document of the institution, the catalog should clearly describe the
389 distance learning program. Complete, timely, and accurate description of
390 instructional delivery could also be presented in the catalog or in supplemental
391 publications. If prerequisites for participation or other program requirements exist,
392 these should be clearly stated, as should expected learning outcomes and the

393 nature of the faculty/student interaction. Transferability of credit should be
394 addressed in a forthright manner, as should matters regarding fees.

395 **Intellectual Property Rights**

396 The preparation of distance learning instructional materials differs from the
397 preparation of materials for the traditional classroom setting, raising questions
398 about ownership, copyright, and fair use. Faculty and administrative personnel will
399 need to develop policies that do not undermine faculty rights or the
400 learning/teaching process and that address issues of copyright, ownership, and
401 faculty compensation.

402 **ACCJC Policies**

403 There are two policies of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior
404 Colleges that are specific to distance education and which should be considered
405 when developing distance learning programs as well as in evaluating their
406 effectiveness, the Substantive Change Policy and the Policy on Distance Learning,
407 Including Electronically-Mediated Learning.

408
409 The development of distance education programs may represent a substantive
410 change—a change which alters the objectives or the scope of the institution,
411 modifies the nature of the constituencies it seeks to serve, or changes the
412 geographic area served. Such changes are subject to Commission review and
413 require that the institution notify the Commission in advance of program initiation
414 by filing a Substantive Change Proposal. The policy, cited below, describes the
415 intent, processes, and procedures substantive change. It can also be found in the
416 Accreditation Reference Handbook or the Commission's web site: www.accjc.org.
417 Policy on Distance Learning, Including Electronically-Mediated Learning (Adopted
418 June 2001; Edited August 2004)

419 **Background**

420 Recognizing that most institutions must make use of the growing range of systems
421 for delivery of instruction, including various electronic means, the Accrediting
422 Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has adopted a policy
423 based on principles of good practice to help assure that distance learning is
424 characterized by the same concerns for quality, integrity, and effectiveness that
425 apply to more traditional modes of instruction.

426
427 As methods used to facilitate/conduct distance learning evolve, the ACCJC policies
428 that address distance learning also change. This policy statement has drawn from
429 several previous policies and is intended to replace those policies with a single,
430 unified, and up-to-date statement. Further development of this policy may well be
431 appropriate in the not-so-distant future.

432 **Definition of Distance Learning**

433 Distance learning is defined, for the purposes of accreditation review, as a formal
434 interaction designed for learning in which any portion of the interaction occurs when
435 the student is separated by location from the instructor, resources used to support
436 learning, or other students. Distance learning may employ correspondence study,
437 audio, video, or computer technologies. Educational interactions delivered through
438 these means may occur on campus as well as off campus. These interactions may
439 be synchronous or asynchronous.

440 **Policy Statement**

441 ACCJC policy specifies that all learning opportunities provided by our accredited
442 institutions have the same quality, accountability, and focus on student outcomes,
443 whether they are delivered electronically or by more traditional means. The intent
444 of the policy is to provide a framework that allows institutions the flexibility to
445 adapt their delivery modes to the emerging needs of students and society while
446 maintaining quality. Any institution offering courses and programs electronically is
447 expected to meet the requirements of accreditation in each of its courses and
448 programs and at each of its sites.

449 **Principles**

- 450 • Development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs,
451 including those offered electronically, must take place within the institution's total
452 educational mission.
- 453 • Institutions are expected to control development, implementation, and evaluation
454 of all courses and programs offered in their names, including those offered
455 electronically.
- 456 • Institutions are expected to have clearly defined and appropriate student learning
457 outcomes in all courses and programs, including those delivered through electronic
458 means.
- 459 • Institutions are expected to provide the resources and structure needed to
460 accomplish these outcomes.
- 461 • Institutions are expected to demonstrate that their students achieve these
462 outcomes through application of rigorous assessment.
- 463 • Institutions are expected to provide the ACCJC reasons to believe that these
464 outcomes will continue to be accomplished.
- 465 • Institutions are expected to give the ACCJC advance notice, through the
466 Substantive Change process, of intent to: initiate a new delivery mode, such as
467 electronically-delivered courses; or offer 50% of a program through a mode of
468 distance or electronic delivery.

469 **Guidelines for Implementation Curriculum and Instruction**

470 Each electronically-delivered course or program of study results in learning
471 outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the course credit, degree, or
472 certificate awarded. A degree or certificate program delivered partially or entirely
473 through electronic means is coherent and complete and results in learning
474 outcomes comparable to those delivered through other means. Student experiences

475 result in achievement of intended learning outcomes whether electronically-
476 delivered courses provide for synchronous or asynchronous interaction between
477 faculty and students and among students. Portions of courses delivered through
478 electronic means adhere to the same principles as courses delivered entirely
479 through these means.

480 **Institutional Context and Commitment Role and Mission**

481 Delivery of courses and programs through electronic means is consistent with the
482 institution's role and mission. Review and approval processes ensure the
483 appropriateness of electronic delivery to meeting the course and program
484 objectives. Specific needs of students for whom electronically delivered courses are
485 intended are identified and addressed.

486

487 **Learning Resources**

488 Appropriate learning resources are available to students who take electronically
489 delivered courses.

490 **Students and Student Services**

491 Students receive clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course
492 and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about
493 technological competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability
494 of academic support services and financial aid resources, and costs and payment
495 policies. Enrolled students have reasonable and adequate access to the range of
496 student services appropriate to support their learning and assess their progress.
497 Students have the background, knowledge, and technical skills needed to
498 successfully use the technology involved in their course work. Advertising,
499 recruiting, and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the courses
500 and programs, and the services available.

501 **Commitment to Support**

502 The institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing program support, both
503 financial and technical, and to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to
504 enable students to complete a degree/certificate. The institution ensures that
505 qualified faculty provide appropriate oversight of courses delivered electronically.
506 The institution gives appropriate consideration to the technical skills and needs of
507 faculty assigned to teach through electronic means. The faculty evaluation process
508 provides a means to evaluate technical skills when appropriate. The institution
509 provides faculty training and support services specifically related to teaching via
510 electronic means.

511 **Evaluation and Assessment**

512 The institution evaluates the educational effectiveness of electronically delivered
513 course work, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student
514 retention, and student and faculty satisfaction. Students have access to such
515 evaluation data. The institution provides for assessment of student achievement in
516 each course and at completion of a program.

517 **Questions to Aid in the Evaluation of Distance Learning**

518 An institution offering courses through electronic or other modes of distance
519 delivery is expected to meet ACCJC standards and policies. The questions below are
520 provided to assist institutions in undertaking discussions as part of self study
521 development. Evaluation teams will similarly use them in assessing quality.
522

523 **Curriculum and Instruction**

- 524 • What means does the institution have to ensure that courses intended for
525 electronic or other modes of distance delivery are developed through a process
526 similar to traditionally-delivered courses?
527 • How does the institution ensure that courses and programs provide for timely and
528 effective interaction between students and faculty?
529 • How does the institution ensure that courses and programs provide for effective
530 interaction among students?
531 • How does the institution ensure that faculty has responsibility for and exercise
532 oversight of electronically-delivered courses and programs, ensuring both the rigor
533 of those courses and programs and the quality of instruction?
534 • How does the institution ensure that the technology used is appropriate to the
535 nature and objectives of the courses and programs?
536 • How does the institution ensure the currency of materials, courses, and
537 programs?
538 • How clear and effective are the institution's distance learning policies concerning
539 ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization
540 of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, telecourses, or
541 other media products?
542 • How does the institution ensure that appropriate faculty support services
543 specifically related to distance learning are provided?
544 • How does the institution provide effective training for faculty who teach using
545 electronic means?
546

547 **Evaluation and Assessment**

- 548 • How does the institution assess student capability to succeed in electronically
549 delivered courses and programs?
550 • How is this information applied to admission and recruiting?
551 • How effective is this assessment?
552 • How does the institution evaluate the educational effectiveness of its
553 electronically-delivered courses and programs (including assessments of student
554 learning outcomes, student retention, and student satisfaction) to ensure
555 comparability to traditionally-delivered courses and programs?
556 • How does the institution ensure the integrity of student work and the credibility of
557 the degrees and credit it awards?

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Library and Learning Resources

- How does the institution ensure that students have access to and can effectively use appropriate information resources?
- How does the institution monitor whether students make appropriate use of learning resources?
- How does the institution provide laboratories, facilities, and equipment appropriate to the courses or programs?

Student Services

- How does the institution provide adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support the programs, including admissions, financial aid, academic advising, delivery of course materials, and placement, and counseling?
- How does the institution provide an adequate means for resolving student complaints?
- What advertising, recruiting, and admissions information does the institution provide to students that adequately and accurately represents the programs, requirements, and services available?
- How does the institution ensure that students admitted possess the knowledge and equipment necessary to use the technology employed in the course or program?
- How does the institution provide assistance to students who are experiencing difficulty using the required technology?

Facilities and Finances

- How does the institution ensure that equipment and maintenance required for electronically-delivered courses and programs are provided effectively?
- How are facilities, staffing, equipment, and other resources associated with the viability and effectiveness of the electronically delivered courses and programs reflected in the institution's long-range planning, budgeting, and policy development processes?

34 CFR Part 602.17

§602.17 Application of standards in reaching an accrediting decision.

The agency must have effective mechanisms for evaluating an institution's or program's compliance with the agency's standards before reaching a decision to accredit or preaccredit the institution or program. The agency meets this requirement if the agency demonstrates that it--

- (a) Evaluates whether an institution or program--
 - (1) Maintains clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate in light of the degrees or certificates awarded;
 - (2) Is successful in achieving its stated objectives; and
 - (3) Maintains degree and certificate requirements that at least conform to commonly accepted standards;
- (b) Requires the institution or program to prepare, following guidance provided by the agency, an in-depth self-study that includes the assessment of educational quality and the institution's or program's continuing efforts to improve educational quality;

605 (c) Conducts at least one on-site review of the institution or program during which it obtains
606 sufficient information to determine if the institution or program complies with the agency's
607 standards;

608 (d) Allows the institution or program the opportunity to respond in writing to the report of the on-
609 site review;

610 (e) Conducts its own analysis of the self-study and supporting documentation furnished by the
611 institution or program, the report of the on-site review, the institution 's or program 's response
612 to the report, and any other appropriate information from other sources to determine whether
613 the institution or program complies with the agency's standards;

614 (f) Provides the institution or program with a detailed written report that assesses--
615 (1) The institution's or program's compliance with the agency's standards, including
616 areas needing improvement; and
617 (2) The institution's or program's performance with respect to student achievement; **and**

618 (g) Requires institutions that offer distance education or correspondence education to have
619 processes in place through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a
620 distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who
621 participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The
622 agency meets this requirement if it--
623 (1) Requires institutions to verify the identity of a student who participates in class or
624 coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as--
625 (i) A secure login and pass code;
626 (ii) Proctored examinations; and
627 (iii) New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student
628 identity; and
629 (2) Makes clear in writing that institutions must use processes that protect student
630 privacy and notify students of any projected additional student charges associated with
631 the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

632 (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)