

GUIDELINES FOR ELECTRONICALLY DELIVERED PROGRAMS

I. Institutional Context and Commitment

Electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of educational institutions. Increasingly they are integral to academic organization, with growing implication for institutional infrastructure.

Objectives	Y	N	Comments
1a. Evidence program is consistent with mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program consistent with mission • audience is consistent with mission 			
1b. Compliance with statement of accreditation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does program signify a significant change in accreditation status • Is there a change in stated institutional mission/objectives? • Is the program outside institutional boundaries as defined in law, regulation or policy? 			
1c. Institutional budget and policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there evidence of a plan for sustainability? • Is there evidence of institutional fiscal commitment? • Are institutional policies in place(international admission, degree approval, etc.) 			
1d. Institutional technical, physical plant, staff and support infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the institutional infrastructure sufficient to address technical support (server space, redundancy or load balancing, technical help desk, Internet access) • Is there evidence of reliability of technical services? (Back-up, remote services, etc.) • Does the institution have an IT plan for maintenance, upgrades, etc? • Is the technical infrastructure appropriately staffed? 			
1e. Institutional Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a defined process of program approval. • There exists defined institutional support and process for faculty development and instructional design. • There is a unit/organization that coordinates student support services for distance education. • A process to assure copyright compliance; the institutional copyright policy is current and distributed. • Effective marketing strategies are incorporated. • Strategies for program assessment and evaluation are defined and results are incorporated into program revisions. • Technologies are appropriate to content delivery and student learning. • An institutional financial structure is in place to support electronically delivered programs? 			
1f. Articulation & transfer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation agreements and/or guidelines exist? • The agreements and implementation appears consistent? 			

<p>1g. Technical Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the institution have a structure in place to communicate changes in software, hardware or technical systems? • Is a training program available for faculty and staff? • Do off-campus or “virtual” students have access to training? 			
<p>1h. Hardware, Software and Technical Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the help desk available 24 X 7? If not, what are hours of operation? • How is the range of software/hardware monitored and supported? • Are technical expectations clearly articulated? • Are FAQs available and applicable? 			

II. Curriculum and Instruction

Methods change, but standards of quality endure. The important issues are not technical but curriculum-driven and pedagogical. The big decisions are made by qualified faculty and focus on learning outcomes for an increasingly diverse population.

Objectives	Y	N	Comments
<p>2a. Academic rigor and breath quality assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of approval process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • department level • college level • institutional level • state level • Academically qualified persons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defined learning outcomes • developed appropriate curriculum • determined assessment criteria • participated in the approval process • Percentage of the program available asynchronously <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 • 90-99 • 80-89 • 70-79 • under 70 			
<p>2b.</p> <p>Write in percentage of course content is created by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time resident academically qualified faculty • Work-for-hire content experts • Third-party agencies; (publishing company, software company, other educational institution, etc.) • other: (explain) <p>Write in the percentage of courses that are taught by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional faculty- tenured or full-time • adjuncts • Third Party Agencies • Student Assistants; Graduate Assistants or Teaching Assistants • Other: (explain) 			
<p>2c. Program Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of program requirements are appropriate for student audience’s location, access to technology, timeframe, etc? • Alternatives are available if a students must “stop out” of a program? • Students are advised “upfront” of program, technical, financial and time commitments? • Career opportunities and certification parameters are clearly and honestly communicated? 			

<p>2d. Consortium Agreements Do consortium agreements exist? (Circle and define)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web Instructional Authorware/Framework • Vendor for Electronically Delivered Courses (ALS; Coast; E-College) • Library Consortia • Technical Agreements-Eduprise,Oracle,Cisco • Bookstore Agreements • Administrative Services (Banner, SCT) • Course/degree program <p>Quality assurances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance expectations are defined in contracts and agreements? • Institution has adequate quality control and curriculum oversight? • Redundancy and/or backup services are guaranteed? • Are training provisions and staffing adequately defined? • Are fiscal arrangements specified and beneficial? • Who awards degrees/credit? • How are curriculum decisions made? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do articulation agreements exist? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determined by participating institutions? • determined by state agencies? • determined by other? Define. 			
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<p>2e. Evidence of Interaction</p> <p>Student to student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • email • on-line chats; discussion groups • phone or streaming audio • cyberbuddies/mentors • tutors • and evaluation <p>Student and instructor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • email • faculty-led discussion, chats • virtual or synchronous “office hours” • streaming audio/phone • postal service mail • other <p>Evaluation of interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment instrument employed (summative) • monitoring software incorporated in course delivery(formative) • Assessment results applied to new design or delivery 			
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III. Faculty Support

Faculty roles are becoming increasingly diverse and reorganized. For example, the same person may not perform both the tasks of course development and direct instruction to students. Regardless of who performs which of these tasks, important issues are involved.

Objectives	Y	N	Comments
<p>3a. Institutional policies pertaining to faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload policies exist and are consistent. • Is release time or compensation available for course development? • Compensation policies exist and are consistently applied. • Institutional grants or awards are available for development of electronically delivered programs. • Faculty are aware of institutional intellectual property policies • Institutional professional evaluation policies are inclusive of course design, development delivery and instruction of electronically offered programs. • Are these policies for distance education consistent with on-campus policies? 			

<p>3b. Technical, design and production support for faculty Instructional design support services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualified instructional design staff are available • faculty development workshops and training are adequate and available • attention is given toward sound pedagogical principles • consulting and program design services are available • other? <p>Instructional support services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support is accommodating to faculty • Is unique or additional instructional support available for faculty teaching electronically delivered courses? • Video or graphic support is available? • Software, network and hardware is appropriate for electronic instruction? 			
<p>3c. Support for Course Design and Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are faculty orientation and training programs available on an as needed basis? • Are faculty involved in “Advisory Councils” or “Users Groups” or other venues to provide forums for pedagogical or instructional discussions? • Is the institutional expectations for course design & development feasible given available faculty and institutional support? • Is there institutional support for “early adopters”? • Does the institution demonstrate support for course upgrade and on-going management? 			
<p>3d. Support for “Teaching” Faculty and those involved in Direct Service to Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria exists for selection of instructors for electronically delivered courses? • Training and orientation programs exist for new instructional faculty? • Mentors are available for faculty new to electronically delivered program? • Are training and support services adequate for faculty teaching via electronically delivered programs? Do faculty know about training? 			

IV. Student Support

Colleges and universities have learned that the twenty-first century student is different, both demographically and geographically, from students of previous generations. These differences affect everything from admissions policy to library services. Reaching these students, and serving them appropriately, are major challenges to today’s institutions.

Objectives	Y	N	Comments
<p>4a. Institutional commitment to program continuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the program effectively address needs/demographics of student population? • Do program plan, communications and infrastructure reflect institutional commitment? 			
<p>4b. Prior to Admission into Program Clear communication includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission Requirements • Technical Requirements • Costs and Financial Aid options • Curriculum design, delivery and timeframe • Available support services • Criteria for Assessment/Program Completion • Advising • Technical Help 			

<p>4c. Services Available without coming to physical campus location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional information • Pre-registration advising • Application for admission • Course Registration • Financial Aid Application/Confirmation • Tuition Payment • Academic Advising • Tutoring or Academic Support • Career Counseling and placement • Library Resources • Technical Assistance (24X7) • Bookstore • ADA referrals and support • Other: • Note any “Best Practices” 			
<p>4d. Sense of Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name ways in which institution demonstrates a belief that distance education students are part of the academic community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • Is there a special page or portal for distance education students? • OR are services integrated into campus services with easy access for all? • What evidence exists that distance students feel part of a learning community? 			

V. Evaluation and Assessment

Both the assessment of student achievement and evaluation of overall program take on added importance as new techniques evolve. For example, in asynchronous programs the element of seat time is essentially removed from the equation. For these reasons, the institution conducts sustained, evidence-based and participatory inquiry as to whether distance learning programs are achieving objectives. The results of such inquiry are used to guide curriculum design, delivery, pedagogy, and educational processes, and may affect future policy and budgets and perhaps have implications for the institution’s roles and mission.

Objectives	Y	N	Comments
<p>5a. Assessment of student achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways is the institution documenting assessment of student achievement in courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-line tests, quizzes, • monitoring of students’ time on task vs performance • participation in discussion groups, chats, threaded discussions • projects, homework, papers • student self-assessment • assessment of class performance on individual questions/responses • student performances or productions • other: • How does evaluated students performance compare to intended learning outcomes? 			
<p>5b. Examination Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do procedures exist for identifying proctors? • Do guidelines exist for administering proctored exams? • Are physical learning centers or partnerships utilized for testing? • Is there a means of assuring student identity? • Are examination measurements secure from tampering or contamination? 			

<p>5c. Personal Information Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are safeguards in place to protect personal information? • Are protocols in place for granting appropriate access to evaluation data? 			
<p>5d. Overall Program Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are student retention rates? • Are “exit interviews” conducted and incorporated in program evaluation? • Is there a “capstone” course? • What measure of student competence is utilized for communication skills, comprehension, and analysis? • Is there an assessment of library utilization? • Is there evidence that student satisfaction inventories for support services are used and results incorporated into program planning? • Is the program reaching the “intended audience”? • Is the budget revenue and expenditures as expected and clearly related to program goals? 			
<p>5e. Continual self-evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of on-going program of assessment and improvement? • Program outcomes have been impacted by the assessment (retention, student interaction, curriculum changes, cost, etc.) • Faculty are academically qualified and evaluated. • Program evaluation is reported and acted upon by institution. • Has the program had measurable results? 			
<p>5f. Evaluation of electronically delivered program is consistent with institutional evaluation of all academic programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the processes for evaluation the same? • Are there unique evaluative methods for the electronically delivered programs? (Explain) 			

Notes and Comments: