COE Distance Education Criteria for Accreditation

(Excerpts from *COE Handbook of Accreditation: 2014 Edition*)

STANDARD TWO: Educational Programs

Prior to admission, students are informed of the costs, equipment, services, time, and technical competencies, if any, required by the program, including if applicable, personal data collection and processes, and charges associated with verification of student identity. (2.A.9)

For all coursework delivered via distance education:

- The institution has processes in place to establish that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. (2.A.10)
- The institution's distance education courses and programs are identical to those on campus in terms of the quality, rigor, breadth of academic and technical standards, completion requirements, and the credential awarded. (2.B.11)
- The institution ensures timeliness of its responses (synchronously or asynchronously) to students' requests by placing a requirement on response time of no more than 24 hours within the institution's published operational schedule of the program/course. (2.B.18)
- The institution directly verifies the currency and quality of all contracted courseware on an annual basis, is directly responsible for such currency and quality, and maintains curriculum oversight responsibility within all contracts. (2.C.14)
- The institution has in place a standardized course template, course descriptions, learning objectives, course requirements (i.e. standard syllabus, outcomes, grading, resources, etc.), and learning outcomes of its programs in order to facilitate quality assurance and the assessment of student learning. (2.C.15)
- The institution monitors student progress and participation by means such as course management systems that provide student time online, frequency of logins, electronic footprints, electronic grade book, and percentage of course completed. (2.C.16)

STANDARD FIVE: Learning Resources

The institution has a written plan for its media services which is appropriate for and inclusive of all methods of program delivery and includes the following:

- The scope and availability of the services. (5.A.1)
- A variety of current and relevant educational materials, such as reference books; periodicals and manuals of a business, professional, technical, and industrial nature; audio-visual materials and equipment; internet access; and other materials to help fulfill the institution's purposes and support its educational programs. (5.A.2)
- The staff person (administrative, supervisory, or instructional) responsible for the implementation and coordination of the media services. (5.A.3)
- Roles and responsibilities of designated staff member(s). (5.A.4)

- Orientation for user groups (i.e., instructors, students, and others). (5.A.5)
- Facilities and technical infrastructure essential for using media materials. (5.A.6)
- Annual budgetary support for the services. (5.A.7)
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of media services and utilization of the results to modify and improve media services. (5.A.8)

STANDARD SIX: Physical Resources and Technical Infrastructure

- A plan that addresses the adequacy and improvement of all physical facilities and technical infrastructure has been developed and is maintained that includes, if applicable, distance education infrastructure. (6.1)
- The technology used by the institution to deliver services and, if applicable, program content to students meets the needs of the students without creating barriers to student support or learning. (6.2)
- An appropriate plan for ongoing operation and maintenance of all physical facilities, technical infrastructure and, if applicable, distance education infrastructure (including elements addressing personnel, equipment, supplies, relevant state law, and applicable federal codes and procedures) has been developed, is in use, is available to employees and students, and is regularly evaluated/revised. (6.3)
- Physical facilities at all locations provide adequate, safe, and clean facilities with appropriate supporting utilities for classrooms, laboratories/shops, offices, rest rooms, lounges, meeting rooms, parking, etc. (6.4)
- An appropriate plan for assuring the health and safety of the institution's employees, students, and guests has been developed; includes a system for reporting and investigating accidents; is in use; has been distributed to employees; is available to students; and is regularly evaluated/revised with appropriate input from employees and students. (6.5)
- An appropriate plan to ensure the privacy, safety, and security of data contained within the technical infrastructure of the institution networks, whether provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, has been developed and is in use. (6.6)
- The institution ensures computer system and network reliability and emergency backup for all technical services whether provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements. (6.7)

STANDARD EIGHT: Human Resources

For all coursework delivered via distance education: The institution provides appropriate training for faculty who use technology in distance education courses and programs. (8.B.6)

DEFINITIONS

Distance Education [Delivery Method) — Education that uses one or more of the technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor; and support regular and substantive instruction between students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used may include the internet, print-based media, e-mail, one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVD's, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVD's, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed.

Distance Education Program—a program that makes available 50% or more of its required instructional hours via distance education.

Distance Education Student—a student who completes 50% or more of his/her required instructional hours in a program via distance education.

Technical Infrastructure—The framework of an institution's electronic student, financial, and IT information system inclusive of hardware and software that supports students, faculty, and staff services that guide institutional operations including the delivery of distance education as approved by the Council.