

# Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Institutional Plan for Distance Education

Directions: Before institutions offer any distance education courses or programs *for the first time*, regardless of modality, this form must be submitted to the Coordinating Board (only institutions who have *never offered distance education*, such as newly created institutions, need to submit this form). The Commissioner of Higher Education may require institutions to provide supplemental reports on distance education programs and/or courses. The plan should reflect institutional academic and administrative policies that express commitment to maintaining the quality of distance education courses and programs according to the Principles of Good Practice as outline by the THECB, as well as criteria set out by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Please complete the following sections, being sure to provide detailed explanations within the body of the plan and adding appendices when needed for more extensive supporting documentation.

Information: Contact the Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research at 512/427-6200.

## Section 1: Introduction

Provide a 2-3 page executive summary of the institutional plan for distance education.

## Section 2: Institutional Issues

1. How will the institution comply with [The Principles of Good Practice](#) for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs?
2. How does distance education fit within the institution's overall educational mission?
3. Have you identified a market for distance education to be delivered by the institution, particularly when delivering complete degree and certificate programs? What are the market factors that are causing your institution to seek to engage in distance learning? Please explain the results of this assessment.
4. Describe how the institution will evaluate the overall effectiveness of distance education courses and programs (such as student learning, student retention, the effectiveness of the utilized technology, mechanisms to provide student feedback during the course, and comparability with campus-based programs), as well as how the evaluation process will be incorporated into overall institutional effectiveness efforts.
5. Who is the officer responsible for distance learning, and is he or she in a position that is appropriate for the institution and the size of the distance education program?
6. Describe the requirements for admissions, satisfactory student progress, and graduation requirements for distance education.

7. Are policies relevant to transcribing, grading, and transfer credentials in place?  
Explain.
8. How will the institution address the needs of distance learners who are covered under the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)?
9. Have [SACS](#) and other professional credentialing agencies been notified, as appropriate?
10. Are the institution's financial resources to initiate quality distance learning courses and programs in place, with a financial plan to maintain them? Please provide details in an appendix as needed.
11. Describe the financial plan for maintaining the support systems needed for the activities, including upgrading of systems currently being used.

### **Section 3: Educational Programs and Courses**

1. What procedures are in place for planning, development, approval and review of quality distance education programs and courses (e.g. [Quality Matters](#) [QM] Program)?
2. What procedures are in place to insure student learning outcomes, student retention, and student satisfaction that are comparable between the distance delivery mode and the traditional on-campus format?
3. What procedures are in place to evaluate all instructional materials developed by other organizations or institutions prior to use in distance education?

### **Section 4: Faculty**

1. Are the qualifications for distance education faculty the same as faculty teaching the same courses in a traditional on-campus format?
2. Describe how the institution will provide orientation and training for faculty teaching in distance education programs and courses.
3. What procedures will be in place for evaluation of faculty involved in distance education programs or courses?
4. Does the institution have a policy that addresses faculty teaching load for those involved in distance education?
5. Describe the process for evaluating the credentials of faculty employed by other institutions who are teaching courses for which your institution is awarding credit.

6. Describe the institution's policies on intellectual property, faculty compensation, copyright guidelines, and the distribution of revenue (if applicable) that are appropriate for distance education.

### **Section 5: Student Support Services**

1. Does the institution provides distance learners access to appropriate student services, such as admissions, registration, academic advising, remedial services, placement services, testing and assessment, orientation, computing departments, financial aid offices, counseling, and help desk/hot line? Explain.

2. Do distance learners have access to library resources of an appropriate breadth and quality for the distance education program(s) offered? Explain.

### **Section 6: Distance Education Facilities and Support Services**

1. Does the institution have available the facilities and equipment necessary to deliver its distance learning programs and/or courses? Explain.

2. Have arrangements have been made for off-campus delivery of required laboratories, clinical placement sites, workshops, seminars, etc. that are associated with distance learning activities?

### **Section 7: Appendices**

Please include any appropriate supporting documentation here, such as strategic plans, policy statements, accreditation certificates, board approval, etc.