

## Figure 1

### Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Distance Education Policy Statement (Summary)

1. Education must include appropriate interactions between students and faculty and between students.
2. Ensuring that the technology is adequate to support the online or distance education effort demands quality equipment to support the endeavor.
3. The administration must develop policies that cover faculty compensation and copyright issues to ensure that everyone understands what is expected and how the process will be governed.
4. Ensuring that faculty are sufficiently supported in the distance education process demands that specific support factors be put into place before an online or distance education program is implemented.
5. Adequate training must be provided to faculty who teach online and distance education programs to ensure that faculty receive the training they need before implementing an online or distance education program.
6. Ensuring that distance and online education programs are sufficiently compatible with campus-based programs is essential in maintaining credibility as well as accreditation.
7. Library resources must be readily accessible to online and distance students not only for accreditation but as an essential part of the teaching process.
8. Ensuring that distance and online students have adequate access to laboratories and other required equipment and facilities is also required by SACS.
9. Administrators must ensure that administrative services such as admissions, financial aid, academic advising, access to mandatory course materials, and placement or counseling services are all provided and accessible to the online or distance student and that access is equivalent to that of campus students.
10. With regard to technology, SACS also requires that the online or distance technology used by the institution be usable by the student, and that students can gain access to the equipment necessary to use the technology.
11. The requirement for appropriate equipment and the expertise to operate the equipment requires reliable server support and a customer-oriented information technology (IT) service department.
12. Finally, SACS requires that administrators conduct long-range planning and develop budgets, policies, and processes needed to effectively provide the staffing, equipment, and other resources essential to the implementation of a distance or online education program.

Sources: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. *Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement*.

<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/distance%20and%20correspondence%20policy%20final.pdf>

(accessed November 13, 2012); Tallen-Runnels, M. K., J. A. Thomas, W. Y. Lan, S. Cooper, T. C. Ahern, S. M. Shaw, et al. "Teaching Courses Online: A Review of the Research." *Review of Education Research* 76, no. 1 (2006): 93–135.