THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE
UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING
April 13, 2000

Members present: David Anderson, Asa Bishop, Tom George, Fred Gilliam, Eric Haley, Mary Holcomb, Laura Howes, Faye Julian, Suzanne Kurth, John Lounsbury, Frank Masincupp, Anne Mayhew, John Muldowny, Mike Mullen, Christian Miller, Johnie Mozingo, Robert Petersen, Max Robinson, Rita Smith, Frank Spicuzza, and Linda Tober.

Members absent: Monique Anderson, Richard Bayer, Mary Dale Blanton, Heather Collins, Robert Hinde, Buck Jones, Robert Maddox, Ryan Paradis, Paul Pinckney, Carol Seavor, Rhea Scruggs, Delores Smith, and Michael Ware.

Proxies attending: Margie Russell (Monique Anderson).

Julian called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

I. Reports

A. Policy for Fieldtrips—Ron Foresta

Ron Foresta of the Geography Department expressed concern about requests to excuse students from classes in order to take various kinds of excursions. Some are related to classes and others have to do with clubs, sports events, and other student activities. He added that some seemed to have more pedagogic value than others. Whatever their educational value, Foresta stated that instructors are not notified far enough in advance of the events. This is especially damaging to the marginal student who cannot afford to miss classes and is ill-equipped to "make up" the work missed, especially if the event is near the end of the term. He made two proposals: (1) that whenever possible events be scheduled outside normal classtimes, during breaks or after the term is completed; (2) that notification be given at the beginning of the term (preferably on the syllabus) so that instructors of other classes can give adequate notice to students who may find it difficult to make up classwork.

Discussion involved the integral value of field work and field trips to certain majors and areas of study and the importance of both faculty and students knowing well in advance the schedule of such trips. Mayhew said she strongly supports the scheduling of such activities during spring breaks. Kurth added that, minimally, students should know the schedule of events at the beginning of the term and that all faculty should include attendance policies on syllabi.

Julian then appointed a committee to address these issues and report its recommendations to the Council at its first fall meeting. The committee consists of: Johnie Mozingo, chair; Frank Masicupp; Suzanne Kurth; Eric Haley; and a student yet to be named.

B. Web-based Courses—Mike Mullen
Mullen reported on behalf of the committee. He noted that it was formed to identify issues involved with online courses and to provide guidelines for the Council as it evaluates these courses. A summary of the report follows on pages 12769 through 12784.

C. General Education Progress Report—Fred Gilliam
Gilliam, chair of the committee, reported on its progress. He began by noting that general education is a dynamic arena; one in which UT was once considered a leader. With the various initiatives of the Board of Trustees, the Higher Education Commission, and the state, it is time to re-examine general education and to better communicate the relevance of general education and it connections to majors. The result of the discussions of several models of general education was the development of objectives for UT's general education. These objectives include the development of critical skills, awareness, and understanding the responsibilities of world citizenship, and a stronger statement of the relationships between all aspects of curricula. He added that the committee was considering general education in terms of its three tiers. These are the University's requirements for the general education of all students; college's specific interests for its students, including matters of accreditation, professional and scholarly development; and the needs and requirements of specific majors. He added that the committee will recommend ways in which all the tiers could be integrated into a coherent whole. As an example, he described a proposal from the College of Engineering to require a course in philosophical ethics which would meet university requirements for general education and would also provide background for a seminar in engineering which deals with professional ethics in a given major. The set of courses would also meet accreditation standards. Committee member Spicuzza emphasized the importance of linking courses as a means of strengthening and making relevant general education.

Gilliam stated a report would be made sometime in the fall. Its implementation would then go through the various curriculum committees and routes of approval.

D. Contract Grading for Honors Courses—Faye Julian
Julian presented the procedures, as approved by the deans, for expansion of the Honors Program to include already enrolled students and freshman non-scholarship students. However, with the expansion of the program, enough courses must be made available to meet new demands. To this end, Julian proposed that students may contract with instructors to meet additional requirements and enroll in upper division courses for honors credit.

After some discussion of whether such extra requirement merit honors courses or if an entire section should be offered for honors students, Council approved the proposal.

Lounsbury moved that those courses contracted for honors credit be designated with the letter "H." Mozingo seconded. The motion carried with one dissenting vote.

Description of the Expanded Honors Program appears on page 12785.

II. Curricular Materials

A. College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources
Frank Masincupp presented the changes which were approved with minor revisions.

B. College of Business Administration
Council approved the material as presented by Margie Russell.

All material requiring Faculty Senate approval appears on pages 12767 and 12786 through 12792.

Prior to adjournment, Julian noted that Dr. Asa Bishop is tendered every good wish upon his retirement. She also said Council offered its commendations for his many years of good service to the Council and to the University. The Council concurred by acclamation.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Tober
Secretary to the Undergraduate Council

University of Tennessee Undergraduate Council
Sub-Committee on Implementation of Online Courses

Preliminary report: April 12, 2000

On February 12, 2000, this subcommittee was charged by Dr. Julian to help identify issues involved in implementation of online courses as they are presented to council for approval and certification. There is some concern, especially in faculty senate, that there is something "different" about a completely online course; that perhaps we ought to evaluate these differently than a traditional face to face class format. Certainly, some concerns may be valid, others may not be. Some of these concerns include the following questions.

1. How do we ensure that the course has rigor?
2. How do we know that it does not simply consist of scrolling text with little or no interactivity?
3. Are these courses different than correspondence courses?
4. Are online courses effective?
5. How can we guarantee "seat time?"

While these and other questions are valid, most of these can also be applied to face to face courses. Indeed, we do little or no quality control with respect to traditional classes. We simply assume that the department and college in question have the faculty resources to prepare a "quality" course. We know, however, that there are numerous examples of poor quality face to face classes that are taught repeatedly, with little or no outcry to change or improve that course. So, what we are really faced with is: "How do we ensure quality in all courses that we, as an academic community, approve?" This is clearly a difficult task!

This subcommittee would agree that if an online course consists of nothing more than scrolling text and PowerPoint slides, then the experience is lacking. However, a well-constructed online course should depend on a variety of resources. Certainly text-based materials will be found in these classes, and the PowerPoint slide presentation can be effective. However, the course should also provide access to: a wider variety of resources than a textbook can provide; graphical and visual information; multiple opportunities and mechanisms for student-instructor and student-student interaction including email, asynchronous discussion forums, synchronous "chat" sessions where appropriate, and other forms of communication. New technologies already make face-to-face synchronous audio and video interactions possible and these should improve dramatically in the near future. The online environment can provide rich opportunities for collaborative projects bringing together individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Mechanisms are already in place for Mastery Learning exercises such as random, repeatable, online quizzing. These courses, done well, may also give our students more opportunities for practicing the written word, as written communications take on greater importance. Assessment methods must evolve, certainly, as the standard objective exam raises concerns with academic integrity. This means that projects and writing assignments take on greater significance. One may argue that integrity issues are still of concern with projects and writing; however, these concerns are valid in traditional classes as well.

Our original strategy was to look to other Universities that are already doing effective online education. However, there are not many models for online course approval and certification out there. It seems that most Universities take the position that there is little difference between a quality online or face-to-face course. Some examples follow. At Iowa State, there is little differentiation between these formats. All new courses there are designated as experimental courses, e.g., PSS 341x, and approved by departmen-

tal and college curriculum committees. After being taught once as an "X" course, they are upgraded to a regular course. While concerns may exist with quality of online courses, this is not formally handled in the course approval process. Marshall University has a protocol for obtaining funds to develop online courses, but information on the approval process is limited. Other programs contacted with no response include University of Phoenix and Drexel University. We will attempt to cull information from other sources in the future.

Quality in online courses has been the focus of other reports. A few of these are attached for your perusal. The "Principles of Good Practice" published by the Southern Regional Education Board outlines the principles they see important in assuring a quality education for online students. This consists of a general set of guidelines to be followed by member institutions participating in the Southern Regional Electronic Campus. A more specific document is the ACES (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision) Guidelines for Online Instruction. This document outlines eight points that should be considered for ensuring online course quality. These are:

1. The course must offer, at a minimum, an equivalent educational opportunity to that provided in a traditional course. This should include equality in the domains of information, skill building, and course evaluation.
2. Specific course content must be amenable to effective delivery in the manner proposed.
3. Reasonable efforts must be taken by the institution to ensure that the student has been respon sible for course work submitted.
4. Distance learning courses must provide an opportunity for the students to be actively engaged in a learning process beyond simply reviewing text-based material, if the parallel traditional course provides opportunities beyond the review of text-based materials.
5. Distance learning courses should not be limited to a recreation of a traditional face-to-face course but should be specifically designed to take advantage of educational opportunities provided by the medium used to deliver the course.
6. The differential impact on student learning which is likely to occur to those students taught in a distance fashion must be considered, and any potential problems must be guarded against or steps for redemption provided.
7. In those cases where distance classes provide for a meeting opportunity for students, the meeting environment should be one that is supportive of and conducive to the educational process.
8. As in all courses at the University level, issues of equity and diversity should be addressed and promoted in a distance environment.

The ACES report also outlines other issues related to course content and objectives, instructional support, and faculty qualifications. These are the much the same issues that must be faced with providing a quality face to face environment as well.

Another recent Executive Summary of a report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy, "Quality On the Line," provides 24 benchmarks that are essential for ensuring quality in internet-based distance education. These benchmarks are put forth for use in making "reasonable and informed judgements with regard to the quality of internet-based distance education." Among these are three Course Development Benchmarks that, in this committee's opinion, should be considered for ALL courses, regardless of mode of transmission. These are:

1. Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design, and delivery, while learning outcomes—not the availability of existing technology—determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
2. Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program standards.
3. Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.

This subcommittee feels that departments and colleges must take the main responsibility for ensuring quality in ANY course that they propose. We, as a course certifying body, may want to look more closely at issues related to course quality across the board. Or, we may want to provide some oversight to Colleges with respect to "Good Practices" that should be followed for course development. However, at this time, we believe that it may be impractical for Undergraduate Council to be the watch-dog on online course quality, much as it is impractical for us to monitor "traditional" course quality.

Having said this, this committee requests more time to thoroughly investigate this issue and come back with more specific recommendations.

Submitted April 13, 2000.

Michael Mullen, Chair
Billie Collier
Susan Metros
David Schumann
Gretchen Whitney

Principles of Good Practice

The Foundation for Quality of the *Southern Regional Electronic Campus*

1999-2000

The *Southern Regional Electronic Campus* will help students find and enroll in high-quality courses and programs at colleges and universities in the Southern Regional Education Board states. Students will be able to complete most of the coursework electronically and may not need to leave their hometowns or campuses. By using the *Electronic Campus*, students will be able to obtain information over the Internet about each course and program and will know the standards that the colleges and universities have pledged to meet for these distance learning programs and courses. Students interested in enrolling in a program or course will be able to link easily with the college or university offering it.

The *Principles of Good Practice*[*], the cornerstone of this electronic marketplace, were developed to assure students about the quality of courses and programs at the *Electronic Campus*. The principles draw upon the work of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and other organizations. All courses and programs to be listed in the *Electronic Campus* have been reviewed against the *Principles of Good Practice* by the offering colleges or universities and have been coordinated through the state higher education agency.

The goal of the *Electronic Campus* is to provide students with a central point of reference, giving them easier access to quality programs and courses. A first step was to conduct a survey. The report, *SREB State Regulations as They Apply to Distance Learning*, found that "**... there appear to be no significant regulatory considerations that would halt the development of such a regional approach.**" Thus, in January 1998, the *Electronic Campus* was launched.

Scope of the *Southern Regional Electronic Campus*

The scope of the *Electronic Campus* will be limited to higher education academic degree and certificate programs and credit courses offered electronically.

Noncredit professional-development programs and noncredit courses may be offered later as the *Electronic Campus* expands.

Use of Principles

The purpose of the *Principles of Good Practice* is to identify the expectations and requirements for participation in the Electronic Campus. Each institution that seeks to offer an electronically delivered program or course will be asked to ensure that it complies with these principles. The offering institution and the state's designated higher education agency are responsible for quality control. The principles will be used to:

- ✓ guide the development of electronically delivered programs and courses to ensure that characteristics of good teaching and learning are addressed;
- ✓ ensure at the institutional level the quality of the program or course that is seeking acceptance by the *Electronic Campus*;
- ✓ review the quality of the program or course before it is sent by a state higher education agency for listing by the *Electronic Campus*.

Basic Assumptions

Several assumptions are central to these principles:

1. The program or course offered electronically is provided by or through an institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body and is authorized to operate in the state where the program or course originates.
2. The institution's programs and courses holding specialized accreditation meet the same requirements when offered electronically.
3. The institution may be a single institution or a consortium of institutions.
4. These principles are generally applicable to degree or certificate programs and to courses offered for academic credit.
5. It is the institution's responsibility to review educational programs and courses it provides electronically and to ensure continued compliance with these principles.
6. The appropriate state agencies or organizations in the state where courses or programs are offered will coordinate participation in the *Electronic Campus*.
7. Institutions offering programs or for-credit courses are responsible for satisfying all in-state approval and accreditation requirements before students are enrolled.
8. Participating states agree to accept the listing on the *Electronic Campus* as assurance that courses and programs meet the *Principles of Good Practice.*
9. Institutions should give priority for enrolling in *Electronic Campus* courses and programs to qualified residents of the SREB region.

Curriculum and Instruction

- ■ Each program or course of study results in learning appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded.
- ■ A degree or certificate program or course offered electronically is coherent and complete.

- The course or program provides for appropriate interaction between faculty and students and among students.
- Qualified faculty provide appropriate supervision of the program or course that is offered electronically.
- Academic standards for all programs or courses offered electronically are the same as those
for other courses or programs delivered at the institution where they originate.
- Student learning in programs or courses delivered electronically should be comparable to
student learning in programs or courses offered at the campus where they originate.

Institutional Context and Commitment

Role and Mission

- The program or course is consistent with the institution's role and mission.
- Review and approval processes ensure the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet program or course objectives.

Students and Student Services

- The program or course provides students with clear, complete and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, prerequisite technology competencies and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic support services, financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies.,
- Enrolled students have reasonable and adequate access to student services and resources appropriate to support their learning
- .The institution has admission/acceptance criteria to assess whether the student has the
background, knowledge and technical skills required for undertaking the course or program.
- Advertising, recruiting and admissions materials clearly and accurately represent the program and the services available.

Faculty Support

- The program or course provides faculty support services specifically related to teaching via an electronic system.
- The institution ensures appropriate training for faculty who teach using technology.
- The program or course provides faculty with adequate equipment, software and communications for interaction with students, institutions and other faculty.

Resources for Learning

- The program or course ensures that appropriate learning resources are available to students.
- The program or course evaluates the adequacy of access to learning resources and the cost to students for access to those resources. It also documents the use of electronic resources.

Commitment to Support

- Policies for faculty evaluation include appropriate recognition of teaching and scholarly activities related to programs or courses offered electronically.
- The institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and to continuation of the program or course for a period sufficient for students to complete a degree or certificate.

Evaluation and Assessment

- The institution evaluates program and course effectiveness, including assessments of student learning, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction.
- At the completion of the program or course, the institution provides for assessment and documentation of student achievement in each course
- Program or course announcements and electronic catalog entries provide appropriate information.

Elaboration of the Principles

These principles serve as guidelines for colleges and universities participating in the *Electronic Campus*. These guidelines will be defined further and will address expanded topics as the *Electronic Campus* grows. The first of these amendments is titled "Principles for *Electronic Campus* Library Services."

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* Portions are from the statement *Principles of Good Practice for Electronically Offered Academic Degree and Certificate Programs*, Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, Denver, Colo., 1996.

ACES GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE INSTRUCTION IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION*

ACES Technology Interest Network
(1999)

COURSE QUALITY:

1. The course must offer, at a minimum, an equivalent educational opportunity to that provided in a traditional course. This should include equality in the domains of information, skill building, and course evaluation.

Discussion: Distance learning offerings should be held accountable to the same standards for quality as traditional courses. Objectives which cannot be maintained at the same level, and which cannot be reasonably modified or replaced with equivalent objectives, should be delivered in a traditional format.

2. Specific course content must be amenable to effective delivery in the manner proposed.

Discussion: Some courses may readily lend themselves to many distance learning formats. Other courses may lend themselves to only a limited range of formats, while some may not be appropriate for distance delivery. In deciding when and how to deliver instruction outside of a traditional framework, faculty should focus on specific objectives, and determine the best manner in which to meet each group of learning objectives.

3. Reasonable efforts must be taken by the institution to ensure that the student has been responsible for course work submitted.

Discussion: Some arrangement needs to be made to attempt to ensure that the registered student has completed the required course work. This does not necessarily mean that every course will require some direct meeting, but at some point a direct meeting where the identity of the student can be verified, and a thorough evaluation of all distance courses and student learning can be completed should be included. One alternative may be to use proctored exams which can be administered at distance sites.

4. Distance learning courses must provide an opportunity for the students to be actively engaged in a learning process beyond simply reviewing text-based material, if the parallel traditional course provides opportunities beyond the review of text-based materials.

Discussion: Current learning theory suggests that appropriate education of adults involves opportunities to process information, formulate solutions to real world problems, and apply abstract theoretical models to specific settings and situations. Traditional classrooms provide opportunity for student interaction, social construction of knowledge and human contact that cannot be replicated simply by reviewing text materials. Distance learning offerings need to carefully consider how to replicate these experiences to provide a broad range of learning opportunity.

5. Distance learning courses should not be limited to a recreation of a traditional face-to-face course but should be specifically designed to take advantage of educational opportunities provided by the medium used to deliver the course.

Discussion: To provide the most effective educational opportunities available, instructors must fully utilize the tools available to them, and build upon the strength of each tool utilized. Advanced technology offers the opportunity to develop new approaches to learning that take full advantage of the technology to move beyond what has been done in the past.

6. The differential impact on student learning which is likely to occur to those students taught in a distance fashion must be considered, and any potential problems must be guarded against or steps for redemption provided.

Discussion: It is unclear at the current time if distance education approaches are equal in all respects to more traditional instructional settings. In some cases, students may gain more, while in others they may gain less. To ensure appropriate educational standards, a range of potential outcomes should be assessed including skills, knowledge, attitudes, personal development, and professional orientation. Distance courses should meet the needs of students in each domain, or steps must be taken to ensure that student's needs in those domains not met through distance education are met in an alternative format.

7. In those cases where distance classes provide for a meeting opportunity for students, the meeting environment should be one that is supportive of and conducive to the educational process.

Discussion: Not all physical environments meet the needs for educational meetings. If groups of students are meeting in a face-to-face setting, the physical space provided must be adequately designed and equipped to meet the specific needs of the learning group.

8. As in all courses at the University level, issues of equity and diversity should be addressed and promoted in a distance environment.

Discussion: A variety of variables influence individual students' communication styles, learning needs, and behavioral patterns. Approaches to distance education may not meet the needs of all students, and the instructor and institution involved have a responsibility to monitor student behavior, learning, and communication to ensure that individual needs are met, and individual differences are recognized as strengths and, as appropriate, built upon.

COURSE CONTENT/OBJECTIVES:

9. Distance based classes should be designed to meet a specific need.

Discussion: Distance education opportunities should be judiciously and wisely chosen to meet a specific set of needs. The availability of technology does not dictate its use any-more than the availability of medication suggests it is the best response to all clients. By focusing on specific needs and working to meet these, institutions can ensure that distance offerings are beneficial.

10. Because counseling courses often involve the exchange of sensitive information about clients and students, security precautions need to be implemented and enforced that ensure appropriate protection of this information.

Discussion: Client and Student confidentiality will be maintained via methods such as, but not limited to, data encryption, pseudonym use, password protection on various access levels to the Internet and other communication programs, and a method of security for the verification of postal delivery of sensitive information.

11. If the objectives for a specific distance class are different than those for an on-campus class, then appropriate steps must be taken to ensure that every distance student receives appropriate redemption to meet all objectives.

Discussion: Programs which provide opportunities for students to learn at a distance must ensure that the educational opportunities provided for all students are equivalent. In some cases, certain objectives may not be appropriately addressed through some distance modalities. In those cases, equivalent opportunities may be provided through alternative formats to ensure student success.

12. Appropriate procedures for evaluation of student learning must be implemented.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT:

13. Students must have access to equivalent educational supports including library resources, tutorial assistance, and access to the course instructor.

Discussion: The University experience expands beyond the walls of the individual classroom, and the information provided in a text. A variety of support materials, ancillary contacts and personal relationships are successfully combined in a well balanced academic environment. Care must be taken to move beyond simply providing class lectures or reading material on-line to incorporating the entirety of the academic experience that the student otherwise would have in a traditional setting.

14. Students must be provided with the opportunity to receive complete training in the technology prior to being required to use the technology and should be provided with ongoing support throughout the educational experience.

Discussion: Just as faculty cannot be expected to maintain currency in all aspects of technology, neither can students. Clear expectations should be established prior to enrollment in a course about the student's competencies in relation to the use of specific technology. If students who are enrolled do not meet these competencies, than it is the responsibility of the institution to provide training and support to help students in those areas where skills and knowledge are lacking. If during the period of time that a student is receiving instruction the interface, technological demands, or other aspects of technology change, the institution must take reasonable steps to ensure that students are trained/retrained to adequately handle these changes. Institutions have a responsibility to

provide adequate support services that can be readily accessed to resolve student difficulties that result from a lack of knowledge or skills, changes in software or equip-ment, software or equipment malfunction, or other circumstances over which the institu-tion has control or responsibility

15. Financial resources must be available to meet the needs of the distance learning activities.

Discussion: Institutions should be aware prior to undertaking distance based educational offerings that standard methods of calculating the institutions financial commitment and needs may not be applicable to new modalities. In all cases, institutions must, in ad-vance, make the necessary financial commitment to ensure that student needs are met

16. Students must be provided with adequate access to faculty in a timely fashion.

Discussion: This may occur through the use of specific electronic media as long as stu-dents have been provided the opportunity for appropriate training.

17. The specific purpose and outcomes of a distance delivery method is to be explained prior to the beginning of the course and included in the syllabus.

Discussion: For most students, distance learning opportunities will be new. Prior to agreeing to participate in this environment, students must have adequate information about the course, procedures, and expectations to make an informed decision about the appropriateness of this modality in meeting their own learning goals.

18. Appropriate policies must be developed and disseminated concerning expectations for student attendance, time commitments, and other faculty expectations for performance.

19. Courses need to reflect sound pedagogy, and where appropriate, opportunities for student interaction and collaboration on specific course materials must be provided.

20. Support resources, such as books, videos, computer software, must be made available to students in a manner that is reasonable for those students who have enrolled in an on-line or distance class.

Discussion: If services are anticipated to be provided to students at a long distance from the main campus, than reasonable steps must be taken to provide those students with access to support materials at distance sites- or the students must be fully informed in advance that they will not have access and that there will be portions of the learning opportunity that they will not be able to participate in.

FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS:

21. Faculty instructing distance education courses should be of equivalent experience and eligible for academic rank in the same manner as their on-site

counterparts.

Discussion: Faculty involved in distance learning opportunities need to be fully involved in all aspects of the academic program, just as they would be if they were involved in more traditional offerings. While some distinctions in qualifications may be appropriate in terms of knowledge of technology or other specialty areas, the breadth and degree of training and experience should be as extensive as any other faculty member.

22. Faculty must be fully trained in all aspects of the technology that is used to deliver the course, and continuous ongoing support must be provided by the educational institution.

Discussion: The faculty member delivering instruction needs to have the requisite skills necessary to successfully implement the effective use of whatever teaching tools are used in the delivery of material. However, faculty outside of computer oriented disciplines cannot be expected to stay current in the rapidly evolving field of computers and related technology. Therefore, institutions that use advanced technology as a delivery tool must be prepared to provide the support necessary to ensure that these tools are used appropriately. This must include support in the design, delivery, student access, and updating of on-line or computer based materials.

23. In those cases where appropriate, qualified mentors or discussion leaders are required, the same standards must exist for determining quality and ability of these support personnel as would be used in a traditional setting.

24. Faculty assignment to distance education courses must reflect the actual faculty involvement, including adequate time and resources for faculty training, course preparation, and technology adaptation.

Discussion: Faculty who undertake to teach classes at a distance are substantially increasing their responsibilities in ways that many institutions are unprepared to understand and acknowledge. Institutions are responsible to monitor faculty behavior and involvement, to assist faculty in transitioning to new modalities of teaching, and to adequately compensate faculty for the additional time necessary to succeed in this new arena.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

25. Course/instructor evaluations for distance classes must be implemented to be commensurate with procedures used for evaluation of classes taught through traditional methods. Students participating in distance classes must be given the opportunity to provide course/instructor evaluations anonymously (e.g., by return-ing evaluations via the U.S. Postal Service).

TECHNOLOGICAL STANDARDS:

26. Technological problems will occur that will require appropriate back-up and/or face-to-face technologies.

Discussion: These back-up technologies should be designed to maintain the integrity of the course in a manner that provides as little disruption to student learning as possible. If student learning is disrupted or a student cannot compete a course due to technological issues that are the responsibility of the educational institution, than the institution is responsible for providing the student with alternative means that will meet their specific needs in relation to the original learning contract.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES:

27. Procedures to address grievances of the student must be implemented.

ACES Technology Interest Network Members**

Thomas H. Hohenshil - Chair
Annette Albrecht
Ed Butler
Robert J. Chapman
Scott Christie
Harry Daniels
David Delmonico
Gary Goodnough
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*Endorsed by ACES Executive Council, May, 1999.

**Special appreciation is extended to Harry Daniels, Scott Christie, and Michael Tyler for their leadership in the development of these Guidelines.

Executive Summary

In the 10 years since the coding language for the World Wide Web (WWW) was developed, educational institutions, research centers, libraries, government agencies, commercial enterprises, advocacy groups, and a multitude of individuals have rushed to connect to the Internet. One of the consequences of this tremendous surge in online communication has been the rapid growth of technology-mediated distance learning at the higher education level. A recent survey by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that from 1994-95 to 1997-98 the number of distance education programs increased by 72 percent. Moreover, an additional 20 percent of the institutions surveyed plan to establish distance education programs within the next three years. The survey estimated that more than 1.6 million students were enrolled in distance education courses in 1997-98.[1]

This extraordinary growth of technology-mediated distance learning in higher education has prompted several different organizations to develop principles, guidelines, or benchmarks to ensure quality distance education. The quality assurance benchmarks promoted by these organizations are designed to apply to a wide variety of institutional contexts and consist of fairly broad statements. Virtually all of the strategies include such topics as course development, faculty training, student services, learning resources, infrastructure, and outcomes assessment.

These benchmarks, which were developed initially for all types of distance learning, have existed in various forms for a number of years. The question that arises is whether they are applicable to *Internet-based* distance education. In short, are the current benchmarks appropriate and necessary to ensure quality Internet-based distance education? Two organizations—the National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest professional association of higher education faculty, and Blackboard Inc., a widely used platform provider for online education—are interested in exploring these issues and their implications. The two organizations jointly commissioned The Institute for Higher Education Policy to examine the benchmarks by studying active distance learning programs at several institutions.

The Institute was approached by the two commissioning organizations in part because of its previous experience in analyzing issues related to quality in distance education. The Institute's widely cited 1999 report, *What's the Difference? A Review of Contemporary Research on the Effectiveness of Distance Learning in Higher Education*, has generated considerable dialogue throughout academia about what constitutes quality in distance learning settings. This report is not intended to overcome many of the limitations of previous research noted in *What's the Difference?* Instead, it uses case studies to help build a foundation for future analyses capable of refining or expanding upon the lessons learned from the institutions studied here.

Specifically, NEA and Blackboard Inc. asked The Institute to attempt to validate those benchmarks that have been published by various entities, with specific attention to Internet-based distance education. This study is designed to ascertain the degree to which the benchmarks are actually incorporated in the policies, procedures, and practices of colleges and universities that are distance education leaders. In addition, this case study seeks to determine *how important* the benchmarks are to the institutions' faculty, administrators, and students.

[1] This count is not unduplicated; the survey tallied students in each distance learning course in which they enrolled, not as individual students who may have enrolled in one or more distance learning courses.

The case study process consisted of three sequential phases. First, a comprehensive literature search was conducted to compile those benchmarks recommended by other organizations and groups as well as those suggested in various articles and publications. This search resulted in a total of 45 benchmarks developed by these other organizations. Second, institutions that have substantial experience in distance education and are providing leadership in Internet-based distance education were identified. Third, these institutions were visited by Institute staff to assess the degree to which the campuses incorporated the benchmarks in their Internet-based distance learning courses and programs. Each site visit included interviews with faculty, administrators, and students. These individuals were surveyed on both the presence and importance of the original benchmarks to determine to what extent they are being followed and if they make a difference in terms of academic quality.

The six institutions participating in the study were: Brevard Community College, Regents College, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Maryland University College, Utah State University, and Weber State University. To qualify for selection the institutions (1) must have substantial experience in distance education; (2) are recognized as among the leaders in distance education; (3) are regionally accredited; and (4) offer more than one degree program via online distance learning. To ensure that a broad spectrum of higher education institutions were represented, the study included a community college, a comprehensive institution, a research institution, and a virtual institution.

The results of the study revealed that, for the most part, the benchmarks for quality Internet-based distance education were considered important and, in general, the institutions strove to incorporate them into their policies, practices, and procedures. At the same time, several benchmarks did not enjoy consensus among administrators, faculty, and students at the institutions and, in some instances, were not considered mandatory to ensure quality in distance education.

The following list represents the final benchmarks resulting from this study. The Institute's analysis of the data and information from the interviews resulted in the elimination of 13 benchmarks and the addition of three benchmarks. Several benchmarks were combined because they addressed the same issue(s) and were related to each other. The final outcome is a list of 24 benchmarks that are essential to ensure quality in Internet-based distance education. These benchmarks may assist policymakers—such as college and university presidents and chief academic officers, state coordinating boards, accrediting bodies, state legislatures, and governors' offices—as well as faculty and students, in making reasonable and informed judgments with regard to the quality of Internet-based distance education.

Institutional Support Benchmarks

- A documented technology plan that includes electronic security measures (i.e., password protection, encryption, back-up systems) is in place and operational to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information.
- The reliability of the technology delivery system is as failsafe as possible.
- A centralized system provides support for building and maintaining the distance education infrastructure.

Course Development Benchmarks

- Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design, and delivery, while learning outcomes—not the availability of existing technology—determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
- Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program standards.
- Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.

Teaching/Learning Benchmarks

- Student interaction with faculty and other students is an essential characteristic and is facilitated through a variety of ways, including voice-mail and/or e-mail.
- Feedback to student assignments and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner.

- Students are instructed in the proper methods of effective research, including assessment of the validity of resources.

Course Structure Benchmarks

- Before starting an online program, students are advised about the program to determine (1) if they possess the self-motivation and commitment to learn at a distance and (2) if they have access to the minimal technology required by the course design.
- Students are provided with supplemental course information that outlines course objectives, concepts, and ideas, and learning outcomes for each course are summarized in a clearly written, straightforward statement.
- Students have access to sufficient library resources that may include a "virtual library" accessible through the World Wide Web.
- Faculty and students agree upon expectations regarding times for student assignment completion and faculty response.

Student Support Benchmarks

- Students receive information about programs, including admission requirements, tuition and fees, books and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and student support services.
- Students are provided with hands-on training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services, and other sources.
- Throughout the duration of the course/program, students have access to technical assistance, including detailed instructions regarding the electronic media used, practice sessions prior to the beginning of the course, and convenient access to technical support staff.
- Questions directed to student service personnel are answered accurately and quickly, with a structured system in place to address student complaints.

Faculty Support Benchmarks

- Technical assistance in course development is available to faculty, who are encouraged to use it.
- Faculty members are assisted in the transition from classroom teaching to online instruction and are assessed during the process.
- Instructor training and assistance, including peer mentoring, continues through the progression of the online course.
- Faculty members are provided with written resources to deal with issues arising from student use of electronically-accessed data.

Evaluation and Assessment Benchmarks

- The program's educational effectiveness and teaching/learning process is assessed through an evaluation process that uses several methods and applies specific standards.
- Data on enrollment, costs, and successful/innovative uses of technology are used to evaluate program effectiveness.
- Intended learning outcomes are reviewed regularly to ensure clarity, utility, and appropriateness.

PROPOSAL FOR EXPANSION OF UT HONORS PROGRAM (ADMISSION OF ENROLLED AND NON-SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS)

In an effort to expand opportunities for admission to the UT Honors Program to already enrolled students and to entering students who do not qualify for current scholarships, we offer the following proposals:

I. Proposal for Admission of Students Already Enrolled at UT

A. Any student with a 3.75 or higher grade point average would express interest in participating in the Honors Program by writing the Director at the beginning of the his/her second semester.
B. Prerequisites:
   1. 3.75 gpa or higher at end of freshman year
   2. Completion of at least one honors course during freshman year
   3. Interview during late spring of freshman year
C. Requirements
   1. Maintain 3.25 gpa
   2. Complete a total of 4 honors courses by end of sophomore year
   3. Complete 4 upper division honors seminars—one each semester during sophomore and junior years
   4. Complete formal programs in computing during fall of sophomore year
   5. Complete resume writing workshop at beginning of spring, sophomore year
   6. Complete senior honors seminar during senior year
   7. Complete senior honors project by end of senior year
   8. Attend honors advising during fall each semester
   9. Attend all scheduled functions for Honors students

II. Proposal for Admission of Non-scholarship Students to the Honors Program

Entering students who apply for admission to the UT Honors Program but who have not received a scholarship must meet the following criteria:

A. High school gpa of 3.75 or higher
B. Strength of the academic program of high school attended
C. ACT score of 28 or higher (criteria presently used to determine if students be allowed to enroll in departmental honors courses)
D. Consideration of a student's residency (in or out of state) might also be a determining factor (i.e., if an out-of-state student is to have the same tuition as an in-state student, should his/her ACT score be higher?)

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

On page 58 of the catalog, change the following paragraph

FROM:

A very careful choice of electives enables a student with an above average academic record to complete a double or triple major by satisfying all the requirements in each curriculum. For this purpose, the advisors of each curriculum should be consulted, the dean to the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources should be informed, and each advisor should maintain a complete record of the student's progress. The multiple major will normally require more than 132 credit hours for graduation.

TO:

A very careful choice of electives enables a student with an above average academic record to complete a double or triple major by satisfying all the requirements in each curriculum. After the requirements for the first major have been satisfied, additional majors within the College may be recorded on the transcript without regard to course overlap among the majors. However, the student should bear in mind that the multiple major will normally require more than 132 credit hours for graduation. The student should consult with an advisor from each curriculum to ensure that all requirements for each major are being met, and each advisor should maintain a complete record of the student's progress. Any student successfully pursuing multiple majors must declare this intent at the time of application for graduation. Students can also pursue additional majors in other colleges and should consult the catalog for requirements in those colleges.

042 Agricultural and Extension Education

On page 59 of the 1999-2000 Undergraduate Catalog, revise as follows:

I. Under the Sophomore Year Course Requirement listing:

From: Agricultural Economics 210.....3
To: Agricultural Economics Elective.....3

Rationale: Agricultural Economics 210 is no longer offered

Effective date: Fall 2000

II. Under the Junior Year Course Requirement listing:

From: OHLD 310.....3
To: OHLD 430.....3

Rational: OHLD 310 is no longer offered

Effective date: Fall 2000

047 Agricultural Economics

Add:

212 The Agribusiness Firm (3)
Introduction to agribusiness firm characteristics and decision-making. Overview of economic principles and the basic functions of management: planning, organizing, controlling, and directing. Specific topics include firm structure, forecasting, marketing and selling, budgeting, breakeven analysis, use of financial statements, capital investment, supervision, staffing, and evaluation. F, Sp

Effective date: Fall 2000

113 Animal Science

CURRICULUM REVISIONS

1. Revise Prerequisites for AS 220
   Formerly: Biology 120
   New: Biology 102 or 130

2. Revise Prerequisites for AS 320
   Formerly: Biology 120
   New: Biology 102 or 130

3. Change cross-listing for AS 320
   Formerly: (same as Zoology 320)
   New: (same as BCMB 320)

4. Revise Animal Science Pre-Veterinary Medicine 3+1 Program
   Drop: 3 credits of non-Animal Science Agriculture electives
   Add: AS 220 (3)

5. Item 1. h - page 62 of 1999-2000 catalogue will change
   From: h. Biology 240 - 4 hours
   To: h. Biology 240 - 4 hours or Animal Science 340 - 3 hours

6. Item number 4, page 62 of 1999-2000 catalogue will change

   From: In addition to all the required pre-veterinary medical courses, the following (or approved equivalents) must be completed before entering the College of Veterinary Medicine:
   a. Math 123-125 or 141-142 or 151-152
   b. Animal Science 101 - 1 hour
   c. Agriculture 101 - 1 hour
   d. Animal Science 260 - 3 hours
   e. Animal Science 320 - 3 hours
   f. Animal Science 330 - 4 hours
   g. Animal Science 340 - 3 hours
   h. Animal Science 380 - 3 hours
   i. One course from Animal Science 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, or 489 - 3 hours
   j. Computer Science elective - 3 hours
   k. Economics 201 - 3 hours

l. Speech 210 or 240 - 3 hours
m. Non-Animal Science Agriculture - 6 hours

To: In addition to all the required pre-veterinary medical courses, the following (or approved equivalents) must be completed before entering the College of Veterinary Medicine:
a. Math 123-125 or 141-142 or 151-152
b. Animal Science 101 - 1 hour
c. Agriculture 101 - 1 hour
d. Animal Science 220 - 3 hours
e. Animal Science 260 - 3 hours
f. Animal Science 320 - 3 hours
g. Animal Science 330 - 4 hours
h. Animal Science 340 - 3 hours
i. Animal Science 380 - 3 hours
j. One course from Animal Science 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, or 489 - 3 hours
k. Agriculture 290 - 3 hours
l. Economics 201 - 4 hours
m. Speech 210 or 240 - 3 hours
n. Non-Animal Science Agriculture - 3 hours

The Show-Case as shown on page 62 of the 1999-2000 UT catalogue will change from:

Freshman

Agriculture 101	3
Animal Science	. 1
Biology 130-140	8
English 101-102	6
Math 123-124 or 141-142 or 151-152	6-8
Chemistry 120-130	8

Sophomore

Biology 240 or Animal Science 340	4-3
Biology Elective	2-3
Agriculture 290	3
Speech 210 or 240	3
Chemistry 350, 360-369	8
Physics 221-222	8
Animal Science 260	3
[2,3]Humanities Elective	2
[1,2]Social Science Elective	3

Junior

Biochemistry 410	4
[2,4]Writing elective	3
[2]Economics 201	4
Animal Science 320, 330, 340, 380	13
One course from Animal Science 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 489	3
Non-Animal Science Agriculture	6
Total	99-101 hours

CHANGE TO:

Freshman

Agriculture andNatural Resources 101	3
Animal Science 101	1
Biology 130-140	8
English 101-102	6
Math 123-125 or 1410142 or 151-152	6-8
Chemistry 120-130	8
Total	32-34

Sophomore

Animal Science	3
Biology Elective	4
Agriculture and Natural Resources 290	3
Speech 210 or 240	3
Chemistry 350, 360-369	8
Physics 221-222	8
Animal Science 260	3
[2,3]Humanities Elective	3
	35

Junior

Biochemistry 410	4
[2,4]Writing elective	3
[2]Economics 201	4
Animal Science 320, 330, 340, 380	13
One course from Animal Science 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 489	3
Non-Animal Science Agriculture	3
[1,2]Social Science elective	3
Total	100-102

113 Animal Science

REVISE COURSE DESCRIPTION

OLD

481 Beef Cattle Production and Management (3) Integration of principles of nutrition, breeding, physiology, and marketing into complete production and management programs. Structure of industry, enterprise establishment, systems of production, production practices, and improvement programs. Management evaluated in terms of production response and economic returns. Prereq: completion of Animal Science sophomore and junior core courses or consent of instructor. 2 hours and 1 lab. Sp.

NEW

481 Beef Cattle Production and Management (3) Integration of principles of nutrition, breeding, physiol ogy, and marketing into complete production and management programs. Structure of industry, enter prise establishment, systems of production, production practices, and improvement programs. Manage ment evaluated in terms of production response and economic returns. Comparisons made to small ruminant, forage-based production systems. Prereq: Completion of Animal Science sophomore and junior core courses or consent of instructor. 2 hours and 1 lab. Sp.

390 Food Science and Technology

Revise course number:

410 Food Chemistry (4) (Formerly: 310).

Effective date: 8/00

420 Food Microbiology (2) (Formerly: 320)

Effective date: 8/00

429 Food Microbiology Lab (3) (Formerly: 329)

Effective date: 8/00

On page 62-63 of the *1999-2000 Undergraduate Catalog*, revise as follows:

Food Science and Technology with Concentration in Science

(Revisions)
Math 123-125 or 141-142 to Math 125 and 130 or 123 and 125

FST 310 to FST 410
FST 320 to FST 420
FST 329 to FST 429

Effective date: 8/00

On page 63 of the *1999-2000 Undergraduate Catalog*, revise as follows:

Food Science and Technology with Concentration in Business/Technology

(Revisions)
Math 119 or 123 and 125 to Math 119 or 123 or 130 and 125

FST 310 to FST 410
FST 320 to FST 420
FST 329 to FST 429

Effective date: 8/00

On page 63 of the *1999-2000 Undergraduate Catalog*, revise as follows:

Food Science and Technology with PreProfessional Concentrations

(Revisions)
Math 141-142 to Math 130 or 123 and 125; or Math 141-142

FST 310 to FST 410
FST 320 to FST 420
FST 329 to FST 429

Effective date: 8/00

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

ACCOUNTING

Revise Course Description

311 Accounting for Primary Business Activities (3)

FROM: Study of financial accounting for the primary activities of a business corporation: primary financial statements; revenue-accounts receivable-cash cycle; inventories-accounts payable-cash cycle; cost of goods sold; debt and equity financing; investing. Prereq: 202. Prereq or Coreq: Finance 301 and Management 203.

TO: Accounting for Primary Business Activities (3)
Study of financial accounting for the primary activities of a business corporation: primary financial statements; revenue-accounts receivable-cash cycle; inventories-accounts payable-cash cycle; cost of goods sold; debt and equity financing. Prereq: 202. Prereq or Coreq: Finance 301 and Management 203.

RATIONALE: **The new description merely removes investments from the course. It will be moved to Accounting 414.**

Effective date: Fall 2000

Revise Course Description

414 Advanced Topics in Financial Accounting (3)

FROM: Accounting for entities other than primary business entities. Information systems and transactions of governmental and nonprofit entities; acquisitions and mergers of business entities; transactions with foreign entities; risk management transactions in international accounting; foreign subsidiaries. Prereq: 311 with a C or better.

TO: Investments; revenue recognition; accounting changes; error correction; statement of cash flows; introduction to leases, pensions, and deferred taxes; mergers; acquisitions; consolidated financial statements; foreign exchange and translation. Prereq: 311 with a C or better.

RATIONALE: The new description recognizes that investments will be added to the course and deletes coverage of governmental accounting.

Effective date: Fall 2000

MARKETING, LOGISTICS, AND TRANSPORTATION

Revise Course Description

450 Logistics Information Infrastructure Strategy and Design (3)

FROM: An introduction to information strategy involving both structured and unstructured systems, using Internet and intranet networks. Emphasis will be on designing a structured system using upper CASE tools and an unstructured system using groupware that will be Internet accessible with access control.

TO: An introduction to the use of information tools to design and create applications to support business processes in networked organizations Students will be expected to design and use groupware, both static and dynamic web sites, relational-data base applications and e-commerce applications.

RATIONALE: This change is being offered to reflect changes in the course content and pedagogy made to keep the course current.

Effective date: Fall 2000