

**SACS Commission on Colleges**  
**“Distance and Correspondence Education: Policy Statement”**  
**Issued June 2010**

In its recent update of policy related to Distance Education SACS Commission on Colleges raised the visibility and accountability for the creation and delivery of distance education courses and programs. The policy reiterates the SACS definition of distance education as a “formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction . . . occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. . . .” Existing Commission policies related to distance education are affirmed. Accurate headcounts of distance education students are to be reported by institutions in their annual Institutional Profile submitted to the Commission. Compliance with the Commission’s *Principles of Accreditation* is to be maintained. Some of the increased scrutiny is due to the incorporation of new federal guidelines. Of note is the new federal standard that distance education student authentication processes be in place, either through a secure login and password, proctored examinations, or use of student identification technologies.

Guidelines focus on equivalency of campus and distance education courses and program. The institution is responsible for all aspects of distance education program delivery, including curriculum and instruction, student services and resources, institutional effectiveness, facilities, and fiscal viability.