Southern Regional Education Board's *Electronic Campus*
Common Standards

Southern Regional Education Board's *Electronic Campus* Common Standards are a set of guidelines for states and colleges and universities participating in the regional reciprocity program. The Common Standards are based upon and support the *Principles of Good Practice*. The Common Standards are designed to assist colleges, universities, and state agencies in undertaking review of programs and courses being proposed for inclusion in SREB's *Electronic Campus* (*EC*). Further, this review process will provide participating states, the SREB and ultimately the students in the region an assurance that programs and courses listed in the *Electronic Campus* meet a set of commonly accepted standards. Although many of these standards normally apply to courses and programs offered by colleges and universities, it is the intent of the *EC* to emphasize that these standards are essential to online and blended delivery format.

The Common Standards were developed from a review and analysis of SREB member states' approval criteria. The standards are presented as a "threshold" for program and course integrity, quality and the commitment of the offering colleges and universities to these objectives.

A college and university submitting a program or course proposal for inclusion in the *Electronic Campus* to its state higher education agency should use the Common Standards as a guideline in preparing its proposal. The institution will be required to provide course or program information electronically to SREB for inclusion in the *EC.* It will also be required to provide course/program and related student services information on an institution's *EC* Transitional page located on the institution's website.

Requirements for Participation in Southern Regional Education Board's *Electronic Campus*

1. The online program or course is provided by or through a college or university that is accredited by a regional accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and authorized to operate in the state where the program or course originates.
2. Institutions offering for-credit courses, programs or certificates meet their own home state approval requirements before listing on the Electronic *Campus.*
3. The institution's programs and courses holding specialized accreditation meet the same requirements when offered online.
4. The "institution" may be a single institution or a formal consortium of such institutions. All participating institutions must meet these requirements.
5. These requirements are generally applicable to courses, degree, or certificate programs offered for academic credit.
6. It is the institution's responsibility to review all courses and programs it provides online or in a blended format on a regular basis and to maintain continued compliance with these requirements.
7. The appropriate state agency in the state where courses and programs originate will coordinate participation in the *Electronic Campus.*
8. In lieu of other state regulations or policies, participating states agree to accept the decision of the state where the offering institution is located and that the institution meets the *Principles of Good Practice.*
9. The institution will provide specified course or program information by the web-interface or electronically to SREB that will be published on SREB's *Electronic Campus.*
10. The institution will provide other course or program and related information on an institution's website or suitable "user friendly" alternative format each semester.

Each course or program proposal shall meet the following standards:

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Learning Results
- Program and/or course outcomes are clearly defined and are appropriate for the level of the educational activity.
- Learning results are assessable and consistent with programs and/or courses delivered in traditional learning arrangements.
- Learning results are consistent with the method of program and/or course delivery and learning arrangements.

Programs and Courses
- Program and/or course activities are part of the institution's approved degree and program curricula.
- Courses are a part of the offering institution's inventory of courses.
- The content, sequence and schedule of courses making up a complete degree program are clearly delineated.

Faculty
- Instructional faculty are certified by the institution as being faculty with appropriate academic credentials for the level of the instructional activity.
- Adjunct faculty, if utilized, have been reviewed and approved by the institution to ensure they possess a combination of appropriate credentials and experience in the discipline in which instruction is offered.
- The role of teaching assistants, instructional support staff or others in support of faculty in the instructional activity is clearly defined.

Quality
- A plan to assess the quality and effectiveness of the program and/or course activities on a continuing basis is clearly defined, including:
    - evaluation of faculty,
    - achievement of program/course objectives,
    - the appropriateness of the technology(ies) used,
    - the effectiveness of support services for distance learners, and
    - effective interaction among faculty and students.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT

Role and Mission
- The program or course is consistent with the institution's role and mission.
- The institution ensures the appropriateness of the technology being used to meet the program or course objectives.
- The institution demonstrates commitment to distance learning.
- The institution has policies and procedures that support the course and/or program activity.

Students
- The institution has appropriate administrative and academic policies for students who enroll in the program or course activity, including:
    - admissions policies,
    - tuition and fee policies,
    - transfer of credit to other institutions,
    - refund policies,
    - financial aid policies,
    - grading policies,
    - academic records management, and
    - any other academic policies affecting the course/program activity and academic integrity.

Student Services
- The institution clearly defines the nature and scope of services provided for students in the program/course activity, including:
    - admission,
    - registration,
    - tuition and fee payments, and any other course or program costs, including technology expenses,
    - textbook/support materials,
    - computing and network access,
    - placement,
    - academic advising,
    - listing of all essential course or program information and requirements,
    - testing/grading/assessment, and
    - collection/distribution of course materials.

Faculty Support
- The institutional commitment to support faculty engaged in program/course activities is clearly defined, including:
    - access to necessary technologies and communications materials,
    - training in the use of instructional technology to serve students at a distance, and
    - adequate support for serving the number of students participating in the program/course activity.

Resources for Learning
- The institutional strategy for providing an appropriate level of learning resources for students in the program/course activities is clearly stated, including:
    - student access to library and learning resources necessary for the program/course activity (including where the materials are, how they can be accessed or acquired and how the institution will support student access),

- instruction or training in how to access and utilize library resources and services, and
- student access to and skills to operate the necessary institutional technology.

Commitment to Support
- The institution clearly states its commitment to support the instructional program/activity to its conclusion.
- The institution has the financial resources necessary to support the program and/or course activity.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment Plan
- The institution has a plan for the assessment of academic courses and programs and student learning.

Evaluation
- The institution uses appropriate evaluation measures consistent with its assessment plan.
- Evaluation activities will include means to assess effective student learning for online and blended courses and programs.

Consumer Information
- The institution will provide all prospective students full information on the program or course activity in a document or documents published or otherwise made available to the public.
- Program, and/or course announcements and promotional information, are clear and complete in describing the instructional activity and delivery method.