Policy 5-3
Distance Education

APPLIES TO: All positions and students

POLICY

Effective: 3/21/16
Supersedes: 3/22/10

A. It is the policy of Gaston College to offer Distance Education as a formal educational process that is in compliance with the standards set forth by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), any state and/or federal requirements, and as part of any other College program designed to enhance quality and student success. Compliance with this policy and the principles of accreditation apply to both degree and certificate programs.

B. Distance Education is defined as a formal educational process in which the instruction is synchronous and/or asynchronous. Synchronous instruction and learning is when instruction and learning occur at the same time, but in different locations, and asynchronous instruction and learning is when instruction and learning occur at different times and in different locations.

C. Distance Education includes Internet-based courses developed by the College, other providers, and two-way interactive classes delivered over the North Carolina Information Highway (NCIH).

D. A Distance Education course may employ correspondence study, audio, video, or computer technologies.

E. Instructors are primarily responsible for maintaining the quality of Distance Education per established standards and guidelines. Instructors are also responsible for establishing proper outcomes and fostering student persistence and retention.

F. The College will make a good-faith effort to provide instructors the necessary technological resources, professional development, and other support services as needed. A good-faith effort will also be made to provide the necessary support and services for students to be successful in Distance Education.

G. Instructors and students are expected to maintain ongoing communication as part of the educational process for Distance Education courses including, but not limited to, the use of email and the messaging component in the Learning Management System (LMS).

H. The College is committed to protecting the privacy of students enrolled in Distance Education courses and programs by adhering to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and by establishing a policy that outlines the acceptable use of computers and related devices.
PROCEDURE

Effective: 3/21/16
Supersedes: 3/22/10

A. Students will receive personal login and password information to access Distance Education courses and are responsible for protecting this information. Students are also responsible for notifying the College when it is believed that this information may have been compromised.

B. Grades will be posted securely for only the individual student to see and specifically will not be posted for public review.

C. Distance education records will be maintained in accordance with established procedures.

D. Registration for Distance Education Courses, including courses offered as part of the North Carolina Information Highway, is the same as for traditional courses.

History

Issued: 4/15/97
Revised: 3/22/10
Revised: 3/21/16, Added SACSCOC compliance statements (e.g., state and federal standards, Distance and Correspondence Education and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement); clarified definitions for distance education and modes of delivery; defined synchronous and asynchronous learning; clarified that instructors are primarily responsible for maintaining the quality of distance education per established standards and guidelines; added reference to FERPA; eliminated position description references.