

ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Friday, September 14, 2018

DECISION ITEM : Preliminary Approval of Administrative Procedures for Distance Education (Chapter 300-2-1-.10)

Staff Presenter: Dr. Leonard Lock  
Director of Instruction and Special Studies

Staff Recommendation: That the Commission preliminarily approve the proposed rules related to Distance Education.

Background: The Code of Alabama, 1975, §§16-5-1, et seq. authorizes the Alabama Commission on Higher Education to adopt any rules necessary for the administration of its statutory responsibilities.

Previously, the Distance Education administrative rules were located in the Fiscal and Information Systems section of the Administrative Procedures (§300-2-3). At the June 8, 2018 meeting of the Commission, references to Distance Education were removed from that section due to the fact that these rules more appropriately should be placed in the Program Review section (§300-2-1). Due to the action taken at the June meeting, these are now considered “new” rules.

Supporting Documentation: 1. Proposed new rule to the Alabama Administrative Code to be entitled Chapter 300-2-1.10 (attached).

# Attachment 1

## NEW RULE

### Chapter 300-2-1-.10: Distance Education

(1) Units of instruction offered by Alabama public institutions, including distance education offerings, are subject to Commission approval per the Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 16-5-8.

(2) **Definition Of Distance Education:** A formal educational process using technological delivery in which instruction occurs where students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education may employ audio, video, or computer technologies. Distance education, distance learning, and e-learning are recognized by the Commission as being synonymous terms. Academic courses or programs are considered to be distance education entities when over fifty percent of the content is delivered through distance education modes. [Based on the Council on Occupational Education (COE) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Colleges (SACS/COC) definitions.]

(3) Institutions are to set tuition for distance education offerings, ensuring that they meet statutory requirements. Institutions providing distance education courses or programs are expected to be in full compliance with the standards and/or requirements of any appropriate governing or accreditation authorities.

(4) Academic programs offered through distance education by Alabama public institutions must have been approved by the Commission on Higher Education and must be listed in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory with no restriction to a military base.

(5) Programs approved by the Commission on Higher Education do not require additional Commission approval to be configured and offered as distance education programs. However, institutions preparing to offer existing programs as distance education offerings must report this intent to the Commission prior to implementation.

(6) The Commission on Higher Education does not require approval of individual courses for distance education purposes.

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Statutory Authority: Code of Alabama, 1975, §§16-5-1 et seq.

History: Filed; Amended: