

Section 3.2 Educational Programs

 X 1. The institution has procedures in place for planning, development, approval and review of quality distance education programs; and for meeting external accrediting bodies standards. Please explain the process for programs (not for individual courses).

As noted in statement 3.1.5 above, all proposals for distance education programs are submitted to the same process of approval that is required for new programs and courses taught on-campus. The channels for approval include review and approval by faculty committees and the Dean in the academic units, review by an interdisciplinary university-wide committee (the Faculty Committee on Educational Policy (CEP)), and finally approval by the Academic Senate, the Provost and the President. Program proposals are then forwarded to the U.T. System Board of Regents, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, for review and final approval. Proposals utilizing distance learning modes of delivery are also sent, as required, for review and approval by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

For programs offered through the U.T. TeleCampus, two oversight committees are usually formed. One responsibility is to address quality issues. An Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) and an Executive Committee (EC) are involved in the administration and oversight of the development and delivery of each program. The committees and TeleCampus staff meet regularly to make decisions regarding policies and program development and to share ideas and experiences. Meeting minutes are shared with all participants. Ongoing monitoring of courses and program quality are the responsibility of the instructor's institution and the committees. Listservs and electronic bulletin boards are developed to aid in communication between the various U.T. System participants. The AAC consists of no more than three faculty members from each participating institution, appointed by the dean of each respective college or school. Selection criteria for the appointment include strong leadership skills and commitment to distance learning. The AAC encourages collaboration among all program participants and provides periodic reports and presentations to the chief academic officers of the

collaborating institutions and to the U.T. System. Committee members are responsible for the quality of all deliverables associated with the program and take a pro-active role in ensuring that all content, prerequisites, simulations and faculty are appropriately selected and properly utilized.

The EC is strategic in nature and has responsibility to set overall strategy, goals and policies for the online programs. The various executive committees ensure that the programs stay focused on desired outcomes. Members include the deans or unit heads from the participating universities.

Additional information about the UT TeleCampus committees can be found at: http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/Administration/academic_affairs.html