

Substantive Change Application

Distance Delivery

Background Information on Distance Delivery¹

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) policies outline when institutions need to notify the Commission about distance-delivered instruction and when they need to seek approval. (See policy 3.2(a) and the information below.)

This document defines the characteristics of distance delivery, specifies when institutions must notify the Commission or seek approval for distance delivery, and provides the form for seeking approval.

Commission Definitions for Distance-Delivered Courses and Programs

The Higher Learning Commission uses the following definitions for the purpose of applying its policy on distance delivery to its accredited and candidate institutions:

- Distance-delivered **courses** are those in which all or the vast majority (typically 75% or more) of the instruction and interaction occurs via electronic communication, correspondence, or equivalent mechanisms, with the faculty and students physically separated from each other.
- Distance-delivered **programs** are those certificate or degree programs in which 50% or more of the required courses may be taken as distance-delivered **courses**.

Reporting and Seeking Approval for Distance-Delivered Offerings

The chart below identifies the Percentage Brackets for determining the scope of distance delivery by an institution. The Commission determines the appropriate Percentage Bracket for each institution. Such determination is based on information provided by the institution in its Annual Institutional Data Update to the Commission or when it seeks and receives approval of a proposed change.

Percentage Bracket	Percentage of Distance-Delivered Offerings (calculations are based on degree programs, not certificates)
3	20% or more of total degree programs
2	At least 5%, but less than 20% of total degree programs
1	Initiation of distance-delivered offerings (as described below), but less than 5% of total degree programs
0	No activity

Higher Learning Commission policy requires an institution to seek the Commission's prior approval if the institution plans to **initiate** or **expand** its distance-delivered offerings as described below. When initiation or expansion is anticipated, an institution must submit a substantive change request using the forms contained in this document.

Initiation occurs and a review is required when the institution:

- plans to initiate its first distance education degree program, even when it has been approved to offer distance education certificates or correspondence education degree programs or certificates;
- plans to initiate its first correspondence education degree program, even when it has been approved to offer correspondence education certificates or distance education degree programs or certificates;
- has initiated four distance education certificates and plans to initiate a fifth, unless the institution has already been reviewed and approved to offer one or more distance education degree programs; or
- has initiated four correspondence education certificates and plans to initiate a fifth, unless the institution has already been reviewed and approved to offer one or more correspondence education degree programs.

Expansion occurs and a review is required when the institution:

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

- plans to increase its current activity in distance education degree programs or its current activity in correspondence education degree programs to a higher Percentage Bracket.

In addition, the Commission may require a substantive change evaluation if the institution:

- has never had a focused review of distance or correspondence degree or certificate programs and is offering one or more programs or five or more certificates; or
- has a significant annual increase in enrollment.

In addition to reviewing distance-delivered courses and programs through its substantive change processes, the Commission evaluates delivery whenever it comprehensively reviews an institution. In these comprehensive reviews, the Commission examines the institution's capacity to provide education to its students and the quality of its performance in doing so, whether via distance delivery or traditional face-to-face modes. Comprehensive reviews examine curriculum, staffing, support services, access to appropriate laboratory and library resources, and all other facets of quality higher education.

Questions

For general questions on approval of distance-delivered programs, send an e-mail to changerequests@hlcommission.org or call 800-621-7440 x137. For institution-specific questions, contact the Commission staff liaison assigned to the institution by calling 800-621-7440 and asking to be transferred to the liaison.

¹ Wherever distance delivery is mentioned throughout this document it means distance or correspondence delivery. The following are the Federal definitions (2009) of distance and correspondence education:

Correspondence education means:

- (1) Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor.
- (2) Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student.
- (3) Correspondence courses are typically self-paced.
- (4) Correspondence education is not distance education.

Distance Education means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

- (1) The internet;
- (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
- (3) Audio conferencing; or
- (4) Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).

Substantive Change Application, Part 1: General Questions

Distance Delivery

Note: Wherever distance delivery is mentioned it means distance or correspondence delivery.

Institution: North Central Missouri College **City:** Trenton **State:** Missouri

Name of person completing this application: James Gardner

Title: Vice President of Instruction and Student Services **Phone:** 660-359-3948

Email: jgardner@mail.ncmissouri.edu

Requested Change(s). Concisely describe the change for which the institution seeks approval.

NCMC seeks approval to offer the Associate in Arts degree via distance learning expansion.

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

<p>Classification of Change Request. Check all boxes that apply to the change.</p> <p><i>Note: not every institutional change requires prior review and approval. Review the "Overview of Commission Policies and Procedures for Institutional Changes Requiring Commission Notification or Approval" to make certain that current HLC policy requires the institution to seek approval.</i></p>	
<p>Change in mission or student body:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> change in mission</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> change in student body</p>	<p>Five or more courses:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> at a degree level not now included in the institution's accreditation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> at an out-of-state or foreign location</p>
<p>New additional locations:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> in home state</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> in other state(s) or in other country(ies)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> new or additional campus(es)</p>	<p>New academic program(s) requiring HLC approval:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> certificate <input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> diploma <input type="checkbox"/> master's/specialist</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> associate's <input type="checkbox"/> doctorate</p>
<p>Consortial or contractual arrangement:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consortial arrangement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contractual arrangement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The institution has completed the Screening Form for Contractual Arrangements and has been advised that approval is required. (If not, see the Substantive Change Screening Form for Contractual Arrangements)</p>	<p>Additional Locations:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Request for access to Desk Review for additional locations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Request for access to Notification Program for locations</p>
	<p>Distance Delivery:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Initiation of distance education</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expansion of distance education</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Initiation of correspondence education</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expansion of correspondence education</p>
	<p>Other:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially changing the clock or credit hours required for a program</p>

Institutional Context for Substantive Change Review. In 1-2 paragraphs, describe the key dynamics — institutional mission and internal or external forces — that stimulated and shaped the change.

The mission of NCMC is to assist individuals in our educational/business community to attain their goals through open admission, reasonable costs, progressive curriculum and services-- delivered by a caring, competent staff in a safe, technology-rich learning environment. Following the mission and student demand for distance delivery, NCMC realized the need to offer higher education opportunities to a large and primarily agricultural region in Northwest Missouri. NCMC's online offerings have increased dramatically over the past ten years. Given the increasing demand for and the steady growth of NCMC's distance learning program, it is necessary for NCMC to take the next step and respectfully request the ability to independently offer the full AA degree online.

Special conditions. Underline YES or NO attesting to whether any of the conditions identified below fit the institution. If YES, explain the situation in the box provided.

<p>Is the institution, in its relations with other regional, specialized, or national accrediting agencies, currently under or recommended for a negative status or action (e.g., withdrawal, probation, sanction, warning, show-cause, etc.)?</p>	<p align="center">YES</p> <p align="center">NO</p>	
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Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

Is the institution now undergoing or facing substantial monitoring, special review, or financial restrictions from the U.S. Dept. of Education or other federal or state government agencies?	YES NO	
Has the institution's senior leadership or board membership experienced substantial resignations or removals in the past year?	YES NO	
Is the institution experiencing financial difficulty through such conditions as a currently declared state of exigency, a deficit of 10% or more, a default or failure to make payroll during the past year, or consecutive deficits in the two most recent years?	YES NO	
Is the institution experiencing other pressures that might affect its ability to carry out the proposal (e.g., a collective bargaining dispute or a significant lawsuit)?	YES NO	

Approvals. Check the approvals that are required prior to implementing the proposed change and attach documentation of the approvals to the request. Indicate the file name of the documentation.

- Internal (faculty, board) approvals (file name: _____)
- System approvals (for an institution that is part of a system) (file name: _____)
- State approval(s) (file name: _____)
- Foreign country(ies) approvals (for an overseas program or site) (file name: _____)

No approval required *(Note: the offering of the AA degree has been approved by the faculty, Board of Trustees, Missouri Department of Higher Education and Higher Learning Commission. NCMC seeks only approval for the mode of the delivery to include distance learning)*

Substantive Change Application, Part 2: Topic-Specific Questions

Distance Delivery

Submitting a Substantive Change Request

Attach the “Substantive Change Application–General Questions” as page one of this application. That completed form and the answers to the questions below will constitute the request for approval of a substantive change. It will be provided to future HLC review processes.

The questions are designed to elicit brief, succinct, detailed information, rather than a narrative or references to extensive supporting documents. Do not attach other documents unless they are specifically requested in the questions. The total submission should be no more than 8-10 pages. Submit the completed application as a single electronic document (in Adobe PDF format) emailed to changerequests@hlcommission.org.

Name of Institution: **North Central Missouri College**

Part 1. Characteristics of the Change Requested

1. What percentage of the institution’s degree programs are currently offered through distance delivery (see page 1 for the Commission’s definition of distance-delivered programs)? **20%**
2. Briefly describe the planned initiation or expansion of distance delivery the institution is requesting permission to operate. *North Central Missouri College is seeking to expand its offerings via distance learning. Currently, NCMC offers an AA degree and is approved to offer general education courses via distance education; however, students cannot earn the entire degree via distance learning.*
3. Include a list of all proposed certificate and degree programs planned in the initiation or expansion of distance delivery. For each degree program or certificate:
This proposal is for the Associates in Arts online
 - a. Indicate the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP codes). CIP codes are established by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics. More information is available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/>. *(13.0101 general education)*
 - b. Provide the program name if it is different from the CIP code. *Associate in Arts Degree*
 - c. Specify the program level. *Associates*
 - d. Specify if it is **distance education** or **correspondence education**. *Distance*
 - e. Specify all modalities of delivery. *Online, ITV, Traditional, Blended*

What organizational structures are in place to ensure effective oversight, implementation, and management of the institution’s distance-delivered program?

Guided by the NCMC Distance Learning Policy, the Dean of Instruction and Dean of Allied Health are the key instructional technology administrators. In close coordination and collaboration with the Faculty and the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, the Deans are responsible for oversight of distance teaching and learning, resource utilization, and program administration. The Dean of Instruction and Allied Health responsibilities related to online programming includes the following:

- *Coordinating distance education options including online classes, blended courses, interactive television (ITV)*
- *Participating in the recruitment, supervision, and evaluation of online faculty*
- *Training and supervising instructional staff*
- *Overseeing enrollment operations for distance education courses*
- *Implementing support services for distance education environments*
- *Coordinating the development and evaluation of distance education courses*
- *Participating in distance education program reviews*
- *Developing and coordinating technology training for faculty, staff, and students*
- *Reviewing, and approving as appropriate, requisitions for instructional supplies and equipment to be used in distance education and instructional technology programs*

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

The NCMC Chief Information Officer's responsibility is to support the technology required for online, blended and ITV instruction along with six full-time Computer Services Specialists are trained to provide on-site support and orientations to distance learning students and faculty at the five off site locations and the main campus.

The Chief Information Officer's/Specialists responsibilities include the following:

- *Assisting faculty, staff and students in the use of computer/technical equipment, software and resources*
- *Oversees the purchase and support of all instructional technology for NCMC.*
- *Provides 24/7 technology support for faculty and distance education students.*
- *Monitors and implements upgrades and changes in technology.*
- *Assisting students with online resources.*
- *Operating and maintaining computer hardware, networks, and software which includes a computer lab, ITV lab, and instructor work area*
- *Coordinating with NCMC's Computer Services, telecommunications service providers, repair services and other vendors in the operation and maintenance of facilities and equipment.*

4. Does the institution have a separately identified organizational unit for providing or marketing the distance-delivered program? () Yes (X) No

If yes, please explain how this separate unit coordinates with other academic and administrative units across the institution to ensure the consistency and quality of offerings.

5. If the institution is planning any involvement by external organizations (other than accredited higher education institutions) in key operations as identified below, provide the information requested for each planned involvement. (Note that such involvement by a parent company or by one of its subsidiaries external to the institution in any of these operations should be reported.)

Type of involvement	Name(s) of external organization(s)	% of Involvement
A. Support for delivery of instruction	None	None
B. Recruitment and admission of students	None	None
C. Course placement and advising of students	None	None
D. Design and oversight of curriculum	None	None
E. Direct instruction and oversight	None	None

6. If the institution is planning any involvement with other accredited higher education institutions in key operations identified above, provide the name(s) of the other institutions and the nature of the involvement.

NCMC is not planning any involvement with other accredited higher education institutions other than what is presently listed on the AIDU.

7. Operational Data

Operational Data	Last year (actual tallies)	This year (estimate)	Next year (projected)
A. Total annual (academic year + summer) student credit hours generated	37732	35724	34000
B. Total annual student credit hours generated in distance-delivered sections (if available)	19954	19209	19100
C. Percentage of student credit hours in distance-delivered			

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

courses (B/C, or B divided by A, rounded up to the nearest integer)	53%	54%	56%
D. Total number of academic programs (i.e., counting different majors at all levels)	60	56	54
E. Total number of programs in item D above available via distance delivery (i.e., 50% or more of courses available as distance-delivered courses)	41	42	44
F. Percentage of programs available via distance delivery (100 x E/D)	68%	75%	83%

Part 2. Institution's History with Distance-Delivered Offerings

8. Briefly describe the institution's experience with distance-delivered offerings.

NCMC began offering distance courses in fall 2003 as a part of satisfying its mission statement and student demand. NCMC's service region is the largest geographic region of any community college in the state of Missouri covering 52,000 square miles of a rural and predominately agricultural area of Northwest Missouri. The majority of NCMC's distance learning courses are offered online and have shown a greater than 10% increase each year since 2003. NCMC has managed to keep up with the demands of the growth by increasing the number of distance learning opportunities. While there is always room for improvement, NCMC has offered the region quality distance learning programs to students that are otherwise too expensive or unavailable to students in the region. Historically, the majority of courses offered distance learning that are transferable general education courses. However, due to student and industry demand, more specific programs and courses have been added within the Allied Health and Nursing areas in the last five years.

9. If the Higher Learning Commission approves the institution's initiation or expansion of distance delivery, what future growth does the institution anticipate (e.g., in the next six months, three years, 10-20 years)?

Based on the annual increase in online enrollment in the previous 10 years, NCMC anticipates an annual growth of 10-15% for the next five years and beyond. The increase will expand NCMC's ability to offer more sections of current general education courses due to student demand, rather than the introduction of new subject matter offerings.

10. How does the institution plan to manage this growth?

As the distance learning offerings demand has increased, so has NCMC's response to the demand by providing necessary the resources to support the demand. NCMC has increased faculty qualified to teach online and qualified Information Technology specialists over the last five years. As enrollment continues to rise and resources become available, NCMC plans to hire additional faculty and staff while maintaining and updating state-of-the-art technology. NCMC will also provide additional training for faculty through in-service activities and providing opportunities for travel to distance learning conferences. As always, NCMC will also address the growth of the distance learning area and its needs through its three-year strategic plan as it has in the past. Addressing the need in the strategic plan provides the distance learning action plans with budget authority.

Part 3. Institutional Planning for Distance-Delivered Offerings

11. What impact might the proposed program(s) have on challenges identified as part of or subsequent to the last comprehensive visit or reaffirmation panel and how has the institution addressed the challenge(s)?

None identified in the last comprehensive visit

12. How does the institution determine the need for a distance-delivered program? If the institution offers a traditional program now, how does it decide whether to start offering this program via distance delivery?

The proposed change is in alignment with NCMC's mission of providing higher education opportunities in learning through programs and services that are geographically and financially accessible to a primarily rural population. Satisfying student demand for increased online offerings is the primary factor that led NCMC to undertake the proposed change. Due to the higher cost of distance learning programs and courses, NCMC must currently have a strong student demand in a program or course area. However, in new programs that do not have a history or a present demand, information is gathered through meetings, surveys and industrial collaborations to establish a need for offering distance learning.

How does the institution plan for changes and future expansion of the role distance delivery plays in the institution? Who is involved? How do new ideas and initiatives originate, and how are they examined and evaluated?

13. *As the need for distance learning expands, enrollment continues to rise and resources become available, NCMC through strategic planning expects to hire additional faculty and staff while maintaining and updating state-of-the-art technology. NCMC will also provide additional training for faculty through in-service activities and providing opportunities for travel to distance learning conferences. Since the distance*

learning faculty are the primary conduits for students, their ideas are welcomed. In many cases faculty provide valuable information and solutions to distance learning problems. Where these solutions can be utilized college-wide they are integrated into policies and procedures. New ideas are brought before the faculty senate and President's cabinet for approval.

14. How does the institution ensure that financial planning and budgeting for distance-delivered programs are realistic? What are the institution's projected revenues and expenses?

All financial planning and budgeting is directed through the strategic plan. Growth and development of distance learning has been a primary focus in that plan for the last 3-5 years. Because of that focus, resources are allocated to ensure the distance learning success. These resources include faculty, IT staff and support, plus updates and new IT equipment and software when needed. To estimate revenue for fall 2011- 5456 credit hours were generated in online courses for total revenue of \$791,120.00. Those credit hours were spread over 95 courses which cost about \$135,000.00 in faculty salary. It is difficult to ascertain exactly how much expense should be attributed out of the IT budget that went solely into distance learning, but we estimate at least \$50,000.00 a year is spent on personal, equipment, software, etc. for online. Other expenses to be included but difficult to put an exact figure on are the additional administrative and personal costs.

15. How does the institution assure that promotion, marketing, and enrollment of its distance-delivered programs stay in balance with its actual resources and technical capabilities?

Not applicable

16. What controls are in place to ensure that the information presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications will be accurate?

Advertising, brochures and communications are developed by the Public Relations and Development Office of NCMC. All information regarding any program or course including distance learning must be reviewed and approved by the Dean of Instruction/Dean of Allied Health and Nursing prior to being placed in publications, media or the NCMC website for accuracy.

Part 4. Curriculum and Instructional Design

17. How does the institution assure good instructional design in its distance-delivered programs? How are the institution's faculty and quality control mechanisms involved in the instructional design process?

NCMC full-time faculty drive the development of NCMC's distance learning program by designing an effective curriculum in an distance learning format that promotes learning and challenges and engages students. The process for developing a new distance learning programs or courses at NCMC is as follows:

- ☛ Faculty members complete a written proposal for distance learning courses on a form which includes an expected beginning and ending date for course development. This form requires responses to HLC and Title IV questions to see if the proposal will be compliance with regulations.*
- ☛ The proposal is submitted to the Curriculum Committee for corrections, additions and approval.*
- ☛ If the proposal is approved by the Curriculum Committee, it is then submitted to the Dean of Instruction/Dean of Allied Health for review corrections, additions and approval.*
- ☛ If the proposal is approved by the Dean of Instruction/Dean of Allied Health and Nursing it is presented to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services for approval.*
- ☛ Once approved by the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, the new distance learning course is made available to other instructors who have been approved to teach distance learning courses. They are encouraged to modify the course to meet their unique instructional styles. The Dean of Instruction and/or Dean of Allied Health also assign qualified faculty to revise/update the existing distance learning courses as deemed necessary.*

According to the NCMC Distance Learning Policy faculty are expected to evaluate students through frequent and varied measures in order to obtain a sound appraisal of the quality of their work and subsequently give students opportunity to improve their grades. NCMC distance learning faculty incorporates the recommended assignments and instructional approaches in their courses, which allows them to accurately evaluate student work without requiring proctored exams. For distance learning classes requiring proctored exams, students may set up a time and place with their instructor. Students who do not live close to an NCMC site will be directed with assistance in identifying the most appropriate and convenient testing site in their area. The Board of Trustees fully supports the AA distance learning degree and understands the necessity for the college to offer distance education by approving the budget necessary to sustain it. The Faculty Senate meets monthly to consider new programs or the modification of current programs through the curriculum. The Faculty Senate has endorsed the request for the distance learning AA degree and is committed to its development and success

The President's Cabinet exists to assist the President in formulating and administering programs and activities of the College. It meets weekly and consists of the College President; Vice President for Instruction and Student Services and Vice President of Administration, Dean of Instruction, Dean of Allied Health and Nursing and the Dean of Student Services. The President's Cabinet fully endorses the decision to expand distance learning offerings to include the complete AA degree as well as the submission of this proposal to receive approval to do so.

18. What processes and procedures will the institution use for technology maintenance, upgrades, back up, remote services, and for communicating changes in software, hardware or technical systems to students and faculty?

Upgrades or changes of college software are usually completed during late night or weekend hours. In most cases, employees and students are given at least 24 hours' notice if the college system or parts of the system will be unavailable through their SAIL, MyNCMC or BlackBoard accounts. A college-wide email is sent to college personnel explaining the situation and time the system will be down. NCMC provides a backup server system at its Barton Site location in case the home campus sever is unavailable.

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

19. How does the institution assure that it provides convenient, reliable, and timely services to students or faculty needing technical assistance, and how does it communicate information about these services?

NCMC's student SAIL account offers students two options for help solving technical problems: an distance learning guide (i.e., help pages) that includes valuable information about technology requirements, required technical competence, how to use the system and its tools and a physical help desk. Distance learning students and faculty may access by phone/email. This help desk is staffed from 8:00am – 9:00pm Monday through Thursday during the regular semester with adjusted hours in the summer and between semesters. NCMC's Computer Services Department provides help desk and technical support for computers, internet, email, web page, college network and the SAIL via email and phone during regular college hours. NCMC launched the SAIL distance learning portal giving students access to the following: student email (pirate email), course schedules, degree audits, unofficial transcripts, GPA calculator, registration, schedule changes, and financial aid information. Distance learning students have the ability to be actively involved in campus news and to be informed about college developments, events and activities. Student billing is also available to all students through the MyNCMC portal. Payments can be mailed, processed by telephone or received in person at any NCMC site. NCMC also offers a deferred payment plan for students unable to pay in full or who do not have financial aid in place by the first day of classes. Payment plans may be set up in person or through the regular mail or in person.

20. What is the institution's experience, if any, in collaborating with other institutions or organizations to provide distance-delivered education?

Due to the high cost of resources, budget cutbacks and student demand for distance learning in a large rural service area, NCMC has worked with the following institutions to offer distance education to the students in its 16 county service area: Crowder College, Hilyard Technical School, Ozarks Technical Community College, Northwest Missouri State University, Missouri Health Professional Consortium and Gallatin High School. Through these institutions NCMC has been able to provide students with access to the following programs: Physical therapy assistant, Occupation Therapy Assistant, Medical Laboratory Assistant, Wind Technician, BSN, Dental Assisting, Surgical Assisting, Paramedics and some general education courses through dual credit.

21. If the institution is planning partnerships or agreements with external organizations or institutions as identified in Questions 5 and 6, how will the institution ensure that students can use these services effectively?

Not Applicable

Part 5. Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support

22. How does the institution staff distance-delivered programs? How does this differ from the institution's processes for staffing traditional programs?

The staffing of distance-delivered programs follows the same policy and procedures as the institution's process for staffing traditional programs. The only difference includes training with the online platform and extra follow up to ensure a quality online course is being offered.

23. What is the institution's process for selecting, training, and orienting faculty for distance delivery? What special professional development, support, or released time does the institution provide for faculty who teach distance-delivered programs?

Selection is part of the normal hiring process but emphasis is placed upon prior knowledge and skill with distance learning and the platforms used. The distance learning faculty go through the same training and orientation as all faculty however, again special consideration and travel maybe awarded to distance learning faculty for extra training. Emphasis is placed on distance learning during faculty in-service such as BlackBoard training, break-out sessions, etc.

24. How does the institution assure copyright compliance and keep distance delivery faculty aware of institutional policies on using others' intellectual property?

The policies for distance learning course development are made known to the instructor when NCMC and the faculty member enter into an agreement for the production of a distance learning course. In all cases, United States copyright laws apply. Therefore, if the faculty member is compensated for the production of that course, the course becomes the property of the College. Or if the faculty member waives compensation for the production of that course, the College has shop rights if it was created on College time with College resources. The faculty member who created the course, whether a new distance learning course or an existing course converted to distance learning, has the right of first refusal for teaching it. Full-time faculty can exercise this right during the useful life of the course. Part-time faculty shall be able to exercise the right of first refusal for three (3) consecutive semesters in which the course is offered. Upon refusal, the College reserves the right to employ qualified faculty to teach the distance learning course.

Part 6. Student Support

25. How does the institution assure that distance delivery students have access to necessary student and support services (e.g., institutional information, application for admission, registration, tutoring or academic support, advising, financial aid, tuition payment, career counseling and placement, library resources, complaint processes)? How does the institution provide them information about using these services, and how does it monitor and evaluate their use of these services?

Distance learning students have access to all the student support services available to all students. Currently, all students admitted to NCMC are required to fill out and application online and distance learning students are made aware of the availability of these services during their admission via online. The NCMC website provides a Distance Learning area and directs the distance learner to specific areas of the website

Substantive Change Application: Distance Delivery

where information is available. Students are also assigned their own email account by which the college communicates information directly to students.

26. How does the institution measure and promote interactions among distance delivery students and faculty (e.g., email, online chats, discussion groups, phone or streaming audio, “office hours,” cyber buddies/mentors and tutors)?
Distance learning faculty are instructed to have “substantive interaction” with their students beginning the first week and on a weekly basis through the semester with activities such as discussion boards, email, chats, interactive assignments, etc. In cases where substantive interactions occur, faculty are encouraged to directly relate the activity to the grade. Faculty are required to respond to a student’s request within less than 48 hours, however, most respond within 24 hours depending on the type of assignment. According to NCMC’s Distance Learning Policy faculty will post office hours and be available during posted office hours, via email, phone, discussion board, etc.
27. How does the institution assure that the distance delivery students it enrolls and to whom it awards credit and credentials are the same ones who did the work and achieved the institution’s learning goals (student authentication)?
Presently, it is accomplished through the use of a secure login and in many cases faculty require students to complete specific assignments at the main campus or through the use of a proctor. Distance learning activities are only allowed on the NCMC student assigned email system.
28. How does the institution protect student identity and personal information?
NCMC protects the identity of all of its students and all students (including distance learning students) and follows FERPA’s guidelines for student safety. Students are assigned their own NCMC email address with a private password known only to the student. All information provided to and received from distance learning students via email or BlackBoard is only accessible to each individual student.

Part 7. Evaluation and Assessment

29. How does the institution assess, review, and evaluate quality in distance-delivered programs?
Each department and program under the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services undergoes a five-year program review. A SWOT analysis is performed on the department or program to determine program viability. Academic programs are also monitored by the Missouri Department of Higher Education on a rotation basis for enrollment and use of resource purposes. Students also evaluate distance learning courses/instructors each semester using an online system called CoursEval.
30. How are the measures and techniques the institution uses for distance-delivered programs equivalent to those used to assess and evaluate traditional face-to-face programs? If there are differences, why are these differences appropriate?
NCMC uses the same criteria to measure distance learning programs as it does traditional programs. NCMC uses a system-wide assessment process that includes the success of distance learning programs and courses.
31. How does the institution assess the learning of the students it educates in its distance-delivered programs to ensure that they achieve the levels of performance that the institution expect and that its stakeholders require?
Please link to [NCMC Assessment site](#).
32. How does the institution encourage and ensure continuous improvement of its distance-delivered programs?
NCMC ensures continuous improvement in distance learning the same manner it does for all NCMC courses/programs. NCMC uses a thorough assessment plan process, plus student evaluations, and distance learning faculty evaluations. It also provides opportunities for distance learning conferences and break-out sessions during in-service activities for faculty.