

Quality Issues

IN DISTANCE LEARNING

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FOREWORD

This report results from the work of a task force established by the Board of Directors of AACSB. The board recognized the growing importance of distance learning in business education, and they charged the task force to provide guidance to assist 1) schools developing distance learning programs, and 2) peer reviewers evaluating distance learning programs.

In addition to its response to the two specific requests of the board's charge, the task force report provides a list of questions for prospective students to use when considering enrolling in a distance-learning program. That list is appended at the end of the document.

While this report has as one of its aims to assist peer reviewers evaluating distance-learning programs, it does NOT create new accreditation standards for distance learning. Accreditation standards for business education appear in other documents and have sufficient flexibility to be used to evaluate quality in distance learning. This report should assist reviewers to interpret the standards as they apply in distance learning programs.

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QUALITY ISSUES IN DISTANCE LEARNING

1. Introduction and Background

Distance learning has become a pervasive and growing phenomenon. Innovative use of technologies create more effective techniques to distribute learning in non-traditional ways. As a result, new organizational structures and learning arrangements are appearing throughout higher education. Many traditional institutions have added distance learning programs. Educators are forming new institutions that deliver distance learning exclusively. Academic institutions and corporations are combining resources to bring distance learning to workplaces. Academic institutions are pooling course offerings through distance learning so students have opportunities to create a degree program that uses course offerings from multiple schools. All of these emerging delivery structures bring questions about the quality of the education being delivered.

These guidelines highlight quality issues specific to distance learning. Since distance learning has become more prevalent, it is difficult to distinguish it from campus-based learning. Remote access to learning materials, databases and libraries, electronic communication, computer-connected workgroups, archived lectures, and other features of distance learning increasingly are used in campus-based instruction.

Greater numbers of students on traditional campuses encounter and choose non-traditional learning methods. "Technology-delivered education" often describes learning on today's campus, as well as distance learning. Therefore, many of those issues are relevant for technology-delivered education of all sorts, whether or not it is distance learning.

Distance learning programs can fundamentally change the way schools compete for students, especially part-time students. A school that develops distance learning programs usually increases the scale and scope of its offerings. For example, a school may offer courses and programs to market segments and in locations where it previously had no presence. This has increased competition among providers of business education. Competition also will increase as students within a school's recruiting area discover the opportunity to join programs offered by providers from other locations.

Because distance learning places additional responsibilities on students, they need to be highly motivated and disciplined. The school should communicate student responsibilities and the nature of the commitment students must make to succeed in a distance learning program.

These guidelines raise critical issues salient to quality delivery of distance learning. As such, they do not prescribe required features for distance learning, nor do they provide a "how to" manual for creating distance learning. There are two intended audiences for these guidelines. First, educators who design, construct and deliver distance learning programs should consider these guidelines as a source of ideas to ensure quality programs. Second, these guidelines will aid people who conduct reviews of quality (e.g., accreditation) in distance learning. Experienced distance learning educators already will have encountered many of the issues presented here. These guidelines will provide insights and spur thought among people building and assessing quality in distance learning, provide some new ideas even for distance learning veterans, and provide a useful organization of distance learning concerns.

2. Definition

Distance learning is any learning system where teaching behaviors are separated from learning behaviors. The learner works alone or in a group, guided by study material arranged by the instructor in a location apart from students. Students have the opportunity to communicate with an instructor with the aid of a range of media (such as text, telephone, audio, video, computing and Internet technology, etc). Distance learning may be combined with various forms of face-to-face meetings.

These guidelines define distance learning as all learning situations where learners and instructors are not together as they would be in a traditional setting. Thus, distance learning can occur in many configurations. It can be synchronous (instruction delivered and received simultaneously), or it may be asynchronous (instruction delivered and received at different times). Students may receive distance learning privately, or they may gather in groups/classes to receive it.

Schools use many different variations of technology and interaction among faculty and students. In one instance of distance learning, students at a branch location receive a simultaneous broadcast of a lecture being delivered from a central campus location. In another distance learning situation, employees gather at a corporate site to view videotape of a classroom presentation. Another student works individually with learning tasks provided on a CD-ROM. In another example, individuals work via the Internet with text materials, video clips and interactive exercises. Each of these situations demonstrates distance learning even though the learning experiences differ on multiple dimensions. Whichever of these conditions occurs, these guidelines define it as distance learning when learners are physically separated from the deliverer.

3. Mission

3.1 Inclusion in Mission

Explicitly or implicitly, each school chooses its mission as it faces a wide range of opportunities within a specific context and resource limitations. Schools involved in or planning distance learning programs should begin by ensuring that emphasis on distance learning is consistent with the mission of both the business school and its host institution. Distance learning programs may serve different student populations and may utilize different educational technology or learning approaches from a parent campus. Such programs should contribute to the overall high-quality of the business school and be anchored in the school's mission. A common reason for a business school to undertake distance learning is to make education available to students who might otherwise be denied the opportunity for reasons such as geographic barriers, employment demands, disability or confinement. Schools should ask how distance learning degrees impact the school, and how distance learning degrees enhance or detract from the value of other degrees. The school must ensure distance learning outcomes are of comparable quality with on-campus programs.

Thinking carefully about how distance learning fits with the mission and objectives of the institution is important. It can assist in the choices among delivery techniques, marketing, content and other characteristics. However, well-crafted mission and objective statements cannot substitute for implementation. In the end, program quality is determined by the actions taken.

Recommendation:

Plans and policy statements for distance learning programs should:

- specify the educational objectives of each degree program and articulate courses, sites (if any) and timelines
- consider the distinctive aspects of the student population to be served and local, regional, national or global needs based on the mission
- explain how distance learning programs emerge from and contribute to the mission, goals and objectives of the institution
- specify how the institution's distance learning differs from offerings of other providers

3.2 Commitment to Distance Learning

To be successful, distance learning requires considerable organizational commitment. The school should establish policies and infrastructure (including processes for continuous improvement) for distance learning initiatives to achieve and maintain high-quality. Schools introducing distance learning should recognize that this could shift the focus of school educational efforts from traditional concern for teaching to a broader conception of effective instructional methods. There will be consequential effects to the development of faculty as distance educators. For example, there will be opportunity costs (especially time demands) in committing faculty efforts to distance programs.

Distance learning requires significant financial resources for technology and support. Faculty members and administrators require assistance to manage the logistics of distance learning and support systems must be developed for the distance learning delivery system. An integrated team of computer service technicians, counselors, site administrators, distribution clerks and information resource (library) personnel should support distance learning faculty. The magnitude of these costs often is underestimated by people initiating distance learning programs.

Administrators may be tempted to enter the arena of distance learning thinking that minimal investment can earn above average returns. While there may be efficiencies and economies of scale in distance learning delivery, substantial resource requirements for capital expenditures and sustaining support may mitigate financial benefits. As enrollments grow, infrastructure adjustments may require large investments, rather than gradual increments. Positive economic outcomes are unlikely to occur quickly, and may not occur at all. Schools are advised to enter distance learning for reasons other than a search for financial windfall. Program quality, unique program attributes and program access are more legitimate reasons. The mission should reflect sufficient institutional commitment to ensure that distance learning programs will:

- be maintained through program completion
- have faculty and administrative participation and support
- be effective in terms of learner achievement
- achieve a level of quality comparable to other institutional offerings and consistent with standards of overall quality
- be financially viable

Recommendation:

Benchmark against existing distance learning programs:

- with similar features at comparable institutions to get realistic estimates of distance learning resource needs
- in non-comparable institutions to discover best practices and to inspire innovative approaches

3.3 Stakeholder Involvement

The planning processes that develop mission and strategies for distance learning should include the viewpoints of various constituencies: distance learning students, students in other degree programs, faculty, administrators and employers from the distance learning service areas (local, regional, international). The development of program content, delivery techniques, timing, participation demands, costs and other features of the program(s) will benefit greatly from the perspectives of people who will receive and deliver distance learning programs.

Recommendation:

Systematically solicit information and perspectives from relevant stakeholders to provide guidance for distance learning planning. Such perspectives should be sought regularly to assist planning, implementation, program evaluation, maintenance and improvement.

4. Students

4.1 Student Support Infrastructure

Due to the nature of the distance learning process, students need to take considerable responsibility in managing their own learning. It is essential to explicitly communicate program expectations about student responsibilities in program announcements. Compared to conventional approaches, distance learners must: 1) assume greater responsibility for their learning, 2) take more initiative in asking questions and obtaining help, 3) be flexible, and 4) be prepared to deal with technical difficulties.

To foster student achievement, institutions have the responsibility to identify students' needs and problems associated with the distance learning environment. The school should adopt a proactive stance for monitoring student progress to address barriers and difficulties students encounter.

Recommendation:

- Make program expectations for students clear in advance of enrollment whenever possible, and in no case later than the commencement of the course.
- Establish a resource center, hotline or other mechanism to give students access to academic and administrative assistance.

4.2 Student-Faculty and Student-Student Interaction

A description of faculty-student and student-student interaction opportunities and requirements should be provided. Because distance learning requires students to work independently and to use distributed learning technology to fulfill course requirements, schools must provide proper student training and support. If the program requires collaborative group learning activities, the technology should support those activities, and students should be provided with instruction in the collaborative technologies so that they can participate effectively.

Personal interaction of some form is recommended. In some programs, it may be essential to the integrity of the program and creating a learning environment. A quality distance learning program may include a mix of interactions, including one-to-one tutorial meetings/workshops and residential programs, plus a variety of interactive sessions utilizing a range of technologies (e.g., video/satellite conferences, Internet, email, conference systems, etc.). These interactive elements should be stated in the program or course announcement along with where and when the meetings and/or residential experiences will take place.

Recommendation:

- Thoroughly review the distance learning experience to ensure that any required interactions are meaningful.
- Interactive technology assumptions and requirements should be fully described in promotional and descriptive materials, as should requirements for any attendance at on-site sessions.

4.3 Consumer Information for Students

Promotional and descriptive materials for distance learning programs should clearly articulate the benefits students will derive in terms of learning effectiveness, ease of use, etc. Students should expect that distance learning programs and courses, regardless of the mode of instructional delivery, will enable them to attain appropriate educational outcomes. In particular, promotional materials should provide students with clear, complete and timely information about:

- curriculum, course, degree and admission requirements
- registration process
- financial aid resources, costs and payment policies (including withdrawal and reimbursement policies)
- availability of such academic support services such as counseling, advising, tutoring and placement
- technical competencies and equipment requirements
- performance expectations concerning deadlines, study time requirements and attendance
- when, where and how student/instructor interaction takes place (face-to-face meetings, residential events, telephone, live electronic chat rooms, email, etc.)
- historic completion rates and time-to-completion

Recommendation:

Carefully review all promotional and descriptive materials to gauge completeness and accuracy. Ask students in the program and people unfamiliar with the program to assess the materials for accuracy and clarity.

5. Faculty

5.1 Faculty Composition and Qualifications

The faculty's composition and qualifications are essential components to creating high-quality distance learning programs. The school's faculty should understand and embrace the change from a teaching-centered to a learning-centered environment; with learners, rather than students, and with facilitators and designers of learning experiences, rather than teachers. The former concentrates on achievement of learning goals and seeks the most effective means to accomplish them. The latter focuses on the organization and delivery of information.

Gaining faculty commitment is vital to successful implementation of a program. It often is helpful to begin with the involvement and development of a small cadre of faculty who are highly respected by their peers. These early-entry faculty then can become resources to assist the development of additional faculty.

The roles faculty will perform should be determined first. Individual faculty members may have roles that are different from, and more specific than, their traditional, on-campus roles. In some cases, distance learning providers have unbundled the traditional faculty role to create specialists in such tasks as creation of course goals and structure, creation of learning materials and experiences, delivery of instruction, or learning assessment. When such unbundling occurs, appropriate faculty management processes must be put in place, including processes that help people in these separate roles to interact with each other. Faculty management must be tailored to

the specific performance demands of learning situations, pedagogy, technology, institutional culture, etc.

Implementing distance learning programs requires new technical and pedagogical skills. The school must provide resources to expand and develop these skills in the faculty. Distance learning demands on faculty in terms of planning and administrative assignments also may differ from traditional practice. Distance learning modules may not fit neatly into standard units the institution uses to manage faculty workloads and assignments. The school's reward system should recognize the demands placed upon the faculty involved in distance learning activities.

Faculty resources and faculty management should be consistent with the school's stated mission. A mission-directed commitment to distance learning may require the addition of new faculty with the requisite skills and experience. Whether through the hiring of new faculty or through developing extant faculty, distance learning technologies and pedagogies must be incorporated into the institution's capabilities.

Recommendations:

- Encourage faculty to engage in the discussion of definitions, principles and core values for the distance learning programs.
- Faculty resources for the programs offered must be strategically driven and systematically monitored and managed.
- Faculty recruitment, reward and development practices should reflect the specific duties faculty members perform.

5.2 Faculty Commitment to Distance

The school's faculty must assume the primary responsibility for the relevance and currency of instructional content and the effectiveness of delivery. It is fundamental to a distance learning environment that faculty and students alike develop skills with a wide range of technologies.

The school's faculty is responsible for ensuring:

- effective creation and delivery of instruction
- evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student achievement
- the development of appropriate assessment strategies
- continued improvement of instructional programs
- innovation in instructional processes
- accessibility to students consistent with the school's expectations and student demands

The school should have well-defined criteria to evaluate faculty in annual reviews and promotion/tenure decisions that reflect a commitment to creation, development and delivery of distance learning. If appropriate, design teams (e.g., faculty and staff) should be evaluated for their creation of learning opportunities.

Recommendation:

Develop and implement systematic evaluation of faculty engaged in all aspects of the distance learning program (e.g., preparation of learning experiences, delivery of learning experiences and assessment of learning, etc.).

6. Curriculum and Learning Issues

6.1 Design of Learning Experiences

The design of learning experiences will greatly influence the success of a distance learning program. Business schools must articulate clearly what is to be taught (e.g., content) and how content will be delivered to students (e.g., pedagogy and technologies). Educators should design learning experiences to take advantage of various modalities that best fit with the learning objectives and with student learning styles. Adapting all learning goals to a fixed technology or delivering traditional lecture presentations over technology-based media are likely to produce disappointing results.

Recommendation:

Supplement content specialists with people who have specific expertise in learning design to create appropriate learning experiences.

6.2 Individual and Group Learning

While both group and individual learning are viable approaches, they call for different behaviors from both teachers and students. Further, they require different kinds of institutional support. Group teaching usually uses some form of synchronous communication (e.g., video conferencing or virtual classroom) in which teachers and students communicate in real time. This could be best characterized as teacher-centered education. The teacher is in control of the learning situation and remains in active communication throughout the learning session. Much distance learning takes place as group teaching. In this mode, the institution (or a partner) provides a meeting/class where the students assemble at a fixed time to receive instruction. Additional interaction opportunities should be provided for students to have contact with instructors, tutors or other personalized assistance outside of the group meeting time.

Individual learning, on the other hand, is typically based on asynchronous communication. The learning situation occurs when (and often where) the student wants it, which is a much more student-centered approach. Media might include CD-ROMs, videotapes, web-based material, or other learning resources. For individual learning situations, the instructor must ensure that interaction opportunities are available to students both with instructional personnel and with other students. These interactions may be either synchronous or asynchronous.

Recommendation:

Carefully consider whether individual or group instruction best fits the mission, student population and resources available, and then construct support systems consistent with the approach chosen.

6.3 Technology Strategy

The choice of strategy should be governed not by the availability of technological solutions, but by the needs of the program, learning and communication approaches chosen (individual/group; synchronous/asynchronous) and desired learning outcomes. The most up-to-date technology may not be the most suitable or cost-effective option. Consideration should be given to equipment compatibility with anticipated receiver sites to minimize cost and ensure successful connection.

Technological change is rapid and not always predictable. Therefore, technology strategy should set broad outlines for how the school intends to develop, while preserving flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances. The development of a school's technology strategy should reflect a systematic evaluation of its existing technology and user experiences. Planning to continuously improve the delivery of distance learning programs is essential, especially as better communications technologies evolve. The strategy also should be informed by knowledge of key trends in the development of instructional technology.

Recommendation:

The institution should make monitor and review technology used in distance learning programs.

6.4 Assessment

The choice of assessment methodologies is an important decision in instructional design, which fundamentally affects student behavior and achievement of learning outcomes. This is especially true of distance learning programs, in which students often focus heavily on formal assessment requirements. Decisions on the timing of assessment should be made with a view to encouraging student progression and program completion.

Assessment choices should support intended learning outcomes, but they also should be consistent with desired learning approaches (e.g., individual vs. group-based learning and integrated vs. isolated subject approaches). Assessment policy should set out the need for formative assessment of students (e.g., projects and assignments and encouraging students to learn through application). It also should supply summative assessment through formal examination or testing, to measure the attainment of knowledge and skills at specific points in the program. Schools with distance learning programs that aim to achieve learning outcomes similar to conventional programs should have comparable assessment standards.

In devising appropriate assessment for distance learning programs, schools should seek to maintain assessment integrity. Attention should be paid to testing procedures to ensure adequate levels of security. Where formal examinations constitute part of the assessment process, schools should make adequate provisions for distance learners and should explain the arrangements to students prior to joining the program. Assessment requirements, including the timing of assessments, should be made explicit at the outset.

Recommendation:

Direct sufficient resources to assessment issues and begin work on assessments as a part of the program development.

7. Instructional Resources

7.1 Resource Sufficiency

Program effectiveness is influenced by resource availability and the way instructional programs are managed, delivered and evaluated. Design, implementation and assessment of distance learning programs should place additional emphasis on access to, and utilization of, learning resources. Traditional learning resources may be transformed with the aid of information technology to meet student needs.

- Appropriate instructional technologies and related support should be available and used by faculty. Schools must provide sufficient training to faculty and staff in the use of information technology.
- Students should have access to, and be required to make use of, library and computing facilities, including electronic access to libraries and other resources. Schools must provide students with information on the equipment and network requirements needed to access these learning resources. Students should receive adequate orientation and/or training in the use of technology. The school's student support system should include student training, technology and technical assistance, library and information services, registration, assessment, and advising. The support system should be compatible with the learning delivery system and reflect different learning styles.
- Schools that emphasize graduate programs or scholarship must augment library resources, databases and information technology appropriately. Partnerships should identify additional and/or shared learning resources for graduate programs.
- When on-campus resources cannot be duplicated for distance learning programs, comparable access should be provided through inter-library loans, electronic delivery systems, agreements with other libraries, etc. The emphasis should be on student use of technology and the resultant availability and quality of learning resources.
- Integrity and security of the information system should be addressed in the school's technology plan.
- Space, facilities and staff support should be adequate to meet program goals and objectives. An appropriate infrastructure should not be an ancillary consideration. Since these resources are critical to success it is important that they be reflected in long-range planning, budgeting and policy development.

Recommendation:

Resource assessment should be a regular part of an annual distance learning program review.

8. Intellectual Contributions

8.1 Intellectual Contribution Policies

The employment of distance education by universities and colleges highlight issues related to ownership and use of educational products and materials developed for distance learning. Policies and practices should be clearly specified and actively communicated concerning ownership, rights, editing privileges, distribution, royalties, use fees and commercial sales of materials developed by employees that are to be used in distance education programs. These policies must take into account the ownership of materials over time and across institutions. Materials may be developed by a faculty member who then relocates to another institution. May the originating institution use those materials when it no longer employs that faculty member? If so, should he or she be compensated? May the faculty member use the materials at the second institution? These and other ownership issues are a critical part of the emerging legal landscape of distance learning.

Recommendation:

Develop explicit intellectual property rights policies for materials used in distance learning programs.

8.2 Compensation

University policies should clearly state the relationship between employee compensation and institutional revenues generated from the sale, licensing or use of employee-developed intellectual contributions. All parties should be apprised of these policies before projects begin.

Recommendation:

Develop specific policies regarding licensing and other revenue-sharing practices with distance learning materials.

9. Business and Institutional Relationships

9.1 Off-Site Support

Delivering education beyond the campus environment imposes upon an institution a concomitant responsibility to provide off-campus students and faculty with sufficient support services to facilitate convenient participation. Support services generally include those normally available to all students, such as admissions, registration, student records, academic advisement, library, bookstore, financial services, etc. Those organizations providing support services should be involved in early planning because their cooperation can be critical to a program's success. Prior to implementation of distance education programs, carefully consider and plan the appropriate services and access needs. In addition, a systematic process is required to monitor and ensure adequacy of support.

Recommendation:

- Develop student support services before initiating distance learning programs.
- Establish clear responsibility chains with the affiliated service providers.
- Formalize mutual expectations and responsibilities of off-site, intra-campus and other partners.
- Regularly survey students to determine and improve support needs.

9.2 Customized Distance Learning Programs

Customized versions of authorized degree programs developed for specific client organizations should have requirements and quality standards comparable with open enrollment programs. Institutions should have formal processes for ensuring the faculty approval of customized degree programs, including any modifications to materials or assessment.

In undertaking customized degree programs for corporate clients, the school should make clear its respective obligation to the client and the students regarding:

- information about the student's performance in the program
- confidentiality of client information included in assignments and projects
- intellectual property rights included in assessment
- the student's right to continue in the program in the event of change in employment
- the institutional locus of control for the program

Recommendation:

When an institution delivers distance learning for a corporate client, it should be delivered in a manner and quality that would allow students to transfer credits between the corporate and open programs.

9.3 Partnership Arrangements

Distance learning approaches can enable schools to deploy programs widely through partnership arrangements with other institutions. With such arrangements, institutions may leverage and trade areas of specialty. A school may partner with other individuals or bodies at many points in its value chain:

- producing distance learning materials
- providing information technology infrastructure and support
- managing faculty support and interaction
- administering the program
- marketing the program

In all cases of partnering, schools should ensure that the rights and obligations of all parties are agreed to and made explicit at the outset; including any performance standards, and that mechanisms exist for monitoring performance and continuous improvement.

Where a school partners with another body for the delivery of its own programs, responsibility remains with the school. This means that the school has responsibility for:

- program quality and quality assurance processes
- learning assessment standards
- assurance of completion of degree requirements
- student support in the event that the partner withdraws from the program

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Issues of Quality Distance Learning Delivery

Over the past decade, distance learning activity has become pervasive in higher education. Business schools have sought opportunities through distance education, including expanding market reach, increasing revenues, and providing service to corporate employees and conventional student populations. To maintain effective and high-quality distance learning offerings, programs need to be consistent with the school's stated mission. Moreover, quality distance learning brings a shift in perspective from teaching-centered to learning-centered education. Rather than concentrating on teaching inputs, effective distance learning encourages a focus on student learning outcomes. To accomplish desired outcomes, this focus brings with it a change in the roles of students and faculty, as well as needed support services.

Learning-centered education requires students to assume an expanded responsibility for their learning. Learning occurs through interaction with faculty members and other students, sustained independent study, and the use of technology to produce meaningful learning experiences. Maturity and motivation to learn characterize the successful distance learning student.

Faculty members are responsible for developing a pedagogy that fits the chosen delivery technology. Faculty development and reward systems should be structured to encourage faculty commitment.

In sum, quality distance learning requires careful attention to learning design, effective faculty training, organizational commitment to adequate program support, selection of appropriate delivery technology, and a focus on student learning outcomes.

STUDENT QUESTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING PROVIDERS

The following is a list of questions potential students may wish to pose to distance learning providers:

Accreditation

- Is the institution or program accredited by an established and respected accreditation body?

Admission Requirements

- What are the age, experience, academic qualifications, GMAT (if required), skills or knowledge prerequisites (technical/academic)?
- What exemptions or course waivers are possible?
- Are there any language prerequisites?
- What is the registration process (on-line/in person)?

Structure and Delivery

- Is the program lock-step (fixed curriculum and set cohort with a prescribed course progression)?
- Are there opportunities for electives?
- Are there opportunities to exit and re-enter the program?

Academic Support

- Is the program designed and delivered by regular faculty of the institution?
- What is the availability of academic support services, such as counseling, advising, tutoring and placement?
- Is there some form of help-desk/help-line facility available to distance learners?
- What access to library materials and databases is provided by the school?
- Is all required software provided?

Performance Expectations

- What performance expectations are placed upon students concerning deadlines for assessment, study time requirements, active participation and face-to-face attendance?

Interaction

- When, where and how do student-to-student and student-to-faculty interactions occur?
- What is the mix between face-to-face and electronic interaction?

Completion Rate

- What proportion of students complete the program?
- How long does it take to complete the program?
- Is there a time limit to complete the program?
- Why do students fail to complete the program?

Technical Support

- What technical support resources are available (initial/ongoing)?
- What are hardware and software requirements for the program?
- What prior technical competencies are needed?

Payment Policies

- What is included in the price (books, meals, accommodations, Internet access, travel)?
- What is the expected payment schedule?
- What is the school's policy for reimbursement of fees upon withdrawal?
- What is the availability of financial aid/scholarships?

School's Experience in Distance Learning

- How much experience does the school have in offering distance learning programs?
- How many students are studying in this program by distance learning?