

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE October 9, 2008

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION: Vice President Academic
Deans

CROSS-REFERENCED POLICIES

- Quality Assurance: Online and Blended Course Design
 - Use of Copyright Materials
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POLICY STATEMENT

Grande Prairie Regional College is committed to its regional mandate through distance delivery in remote and/or off campus locations including but not limited to network members served through Alberta-North, eCampusAlberta, and individual Departments and service units at Grande Prairie Regional College. We commit to the development and implementation of a distance education strategy consistent with the Grande Prairie Regional College Academic Plan and embrace, as a policy framework, the principles of Distance Education developed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

DEFINITIONS

Distance education is defined, for the purposes of this policy framework, as a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction occurs when student and instructor are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education may employ correspondence study or audio, video or electronically mediated technologies.

POLICY**1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy is intended to apply to the broadest possible definition of distance delivery of instruction, including telecommunications technologies — audio, video, and computer-based technologies — used for instruction in either live or stored modes.

2. APPROVAL AND PURPOSE

2.1 The College's distance delivery programs/courses have a clearly defined purpose congruent with institutional mission and purposes.

2.2 Each program/course has been approved through established institutional program/course approval mechanisms.

3. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

3.1 Programs/courses provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty, and among students.

3.2 The College's faculty assumes responsibility for and exercises oversight over distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs/courses and the quality of instruction.

3.3 The College ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature and objectives of the program/course.

3.4 The College ensures the currency of materials, programs and courses.

3.5 The College policies are clear concerning ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, conferenced courses, podcasts or other media products.

3.6 The College provides appropriate faculty support services specifically related to distance education.

3.7 The College provides appropriate training for faculty who teach in distance education programs/courses.

3.8 All distance education course materials will be housed on College owned or College licensed equipment.

4. LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

- 4.1 The College ensures that students have access to and can effectively use appropriate library resources.
- 4.2 The College monitors whether students make use of learning resources.
- 4.3 The College delivers student identification cards and information regarding access to online resources and the learning management system.
- 4.4 The College mediates and delivers library resources as requested by the distance students.

5. FACULTY SUPPORT

- 5.1 Training is provided for faculty who teach via electronic delivery.
- 5.2 The College has faculty support services specifically related to teaching via electronic delivery.

6. STUDENT SERVICES

- 6.1 The College provides access to the range of student services appropriate to support the programs/courses, including admissions, financial aid, academic advising, delivery of course materials, and placement and counselling.
- 6.2 The Distance Education Policy adheres to College policies concerning issues relevant to students.
- 6.3 The College provides to students advertising, recruiting and admissions information that adequately and accurately represents the programs/courses, requirements, and services available.
- 6.4 The College ensures that students are informed of the knowledge and equipment necessary to use the technology employed in the program/course, and provides aid to students who are experiencing difficulty using the required technology.

7. FACILITIES AND FINANCES

- 7.1 The College possesses the equipment and technical expertise required for distance education.
- 7.2 The College's long-range planning, budgeting and policy development processes reflect the facilities, staffing, equipment and other resources essential to the viability and effectiveness of distance education.

8. COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT

- 8.1 The College demonstrates a commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to enable enrolled students to complete the program/course.
 - 8.1.2 Attempts will be made to keep content current to best educate students.

9. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The College evaluates the educational effectiveness of its distance education programs/courses (including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student satisfaction) to ensure comparability to on-campus programs/courses.