University of North Alabama Distance Learning
Policies and Procedures Manual

1. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM*

Distance Learning is defined as: A type of education, where students work on their own and communicate with faculty and other students through the university’s course management system accessed via the Internet. Classroom activities occur through e-mail, electronic forums, videoconferencing, chat rooms, discussion boards, instant messaging and other forms of computer-based activities.

* See Appendix A for URLs, websites and web-based forms related to this document

1.1 ACADEMIC COMPLIANCE

All distance learning courses are conducted in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the University of North Alabama as outlined in the current editions of the University of North Alabama Catalog, the University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog, the UNA Faculty Handbook, the Student Directory & Student Handbook, and the General Distance Learning Policies statement. This includes compliance with all relevant criteria of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), other accrediting agencies (Council on Social Work Education, National Association of Schools of Music, National Association of Schools of Art and Design, etc.), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the Southern Regional Electronic Campus (SREC), the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), Alabama state laws and regulations, and Intercampus Interactive Telecommunications System guidelines. Electronic courses are developed and offered in compliance with the SREB’s “Principles of Good Practice - The Foundation for Quality of Southern Regional Education Board’s Electronic Campus.

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs regularly oversees academic review procedures and supplies documentation of compliance with various criteria for appropriate accrediting, certifying, and sanctioning bodies. This office maintains current copies of criteria and guidelines for these agencies to assist university personnel in developing programs that satisfy the relevant standards.

1.2 PLANNING PROCESS

In response to growing student demand, the University of North Alabama, 1995, began development of its distance learning program. Aiming to increase access to educational opportunities and to serve those who are underserved, the University also sought to
compete in a rapidly changing educational market and to increase cooperation with high schools, businesses, other colleges and universities, and government agencies to broaden educational offerings.

The initial intent of the program was to offer high demand courses within the General Studies component of the curricular requirements for the bachelor’s degree program at UNA. These courses were identified as being on-campus classes that are quickly filled and closed to further enrollment and as representative of the curriculum as a whole. As the distance learning program expanded, graduate and dual enrollment courses for area high school students were quickly added.

1.3 NEW COURSE/DEGREE DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for totally new courses, as well as new degree program proposals, progress through the same curriculum development process used for regular on-campus proposals. (See the UNA Faculty Handbook.) The appropriate department chairperson, the college dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs work with the faculty member throughout the development of the course to ensure proper development and compliance with guidelines.

1.4 Delineation of Responsibilities

1.4.1 University Responsibilities

- To provide ongoing financial, technical, and personnel support for the development, administration, and continuation of the distance learning program subject to budgetary constraints.
- To ensure reasonable and adequate access to a range of appropriate academic support services and resources.
- To ensure compliance with accrediting agency guidelines.
- To provide a secure computer network ensuring the integrity and privacy of the communications and records exchanged.

1.4.2 College Responsibilities

- To authorize the offering of each distance learning course.
- To assist in the appropriate development and scheduling of distance learning courses.
- To ensure compliance with related accreditation guidelines.
- To provide academic advisement to distance learning students.

1.4.3 Departmental Responsibilities

- To authorize the offering of each distance learning course.
- To submit course information for scheduling in time for inclusion in printed guides.
- To provide academic advisement to distance learning students.
- To familiarize office staff with relevant procedures and guidelines.
- To ensure course is developed prior to start of semester.
1.4.4 Office of Educational Technology Services

- To provide support for the promotion and administration of distance learning instruction.
- To foster cooperation with high schools, other colleges and universities, businesses, and other agencies for distance education.
- To support and promote technological infrastructure for exclusively online programs and all other distance learning courses.
- To disseminate results of evaluation processes for use in subsequent planning.
- To ensure compliance with accreditation criteria and state guidelines.

1.4.5 Office of Distance Learning

- To coordinate distribution of instructional materials.
- To provide technical assistance to distance learning students and faculty.
- To conduct orientation/training sessions for faculty and students as needed.
- To answer faculty and student questions regarding the program.
- To oversee program planning, evaluation, and analysis, including the gathering of statistics.
- To assist with testing and/or provide proctored testing schedules.
- To market the distance learning program.
- To coordinate and promote distance learning courses with service area school districts and other colleges.
- To ensure the secure transmission and retrieval of course-related materials, in cooperation with the course instructors.
- To maintain and regularly update the Distance Learning Program website.

1.4.6 Coordinator of Academic Technology

- To provide technical support for distance learning faculty and students.
- To provide training opportunities for faculty on the use and development of instructional technologies.
- To provide assistance in the development of Internet-based courses.

1.4.7 Coordinator of Media Services

- To provide design and support research of Smart Classrooms design.
- To suggest equipment to meet faculty needs.
- To act as technology engineer, advisor, and consultant to faculty, staff, and administration.
- To administer the Shoals Videoconference Center and UNA satellite downlinks.
- To assist in videography projects undertaken by the Digital Media Specialist.
- To maintain Media Services’ inventory of equipment for faculty checkout.

1.4.8. Digital Media Specialist
• To maintain equipment installed in the classroom for use with web-based video streaming software.
• To assist faculty in installation of lecture capture software.
• To oversee the conversion of DVD lectures into lecture capture software.
• To maintain equipment for video production and videoconferencing.
• To oversee faculty recording in lecture capture software.
• To provide technical support for distance learning faculty and students.

1.4.9 Faculty Responsibilities

• To follow university, college, and departmental guidelines for development, scheduling, and presentation of distance learning courses.
• To design/adapt course instruction to meet the same standards and criteria set for traditional campus-based courses.
• To participate in curriculum development, coordinating of syllabi, and in preparation of any comprehensive examinations, as required.
• To order any textbooks and supplementary materials that is necessary.
• To design and grade student projects, assignments, and tests in accordance with a schedule which has been communicated to students.
• To develop processes to ensure the integrity of student work.
• To provide for and maintain regular appropriate interaction with distance learning students.
• To support and adhere to the University of North Alabama’s Information Technologies Acceptable Use Statement and other related university policies.
• To observe copyright laws and guidelines as they pertain to the Internet, the World Wide Web, software, and the use and reproduction of materials.
• To secure copyright clearances on any copyright-protected materials used in online course development.
• To participate in the University’s ongoing evaluation of the distance learning program.

1.4.10 Student Responsibilities

• To ascertain possession of the appropriate skills, competency levels, course prerequisites, and equipment (including browser, operating system, and software) required for the distance learning course.
• To determine that the course meets individual degree requirements.
• To assume responsibility for contacting assigned advisor/instructor.
• To complete all assigned coursework by deadlines and before the end of the semester.
• To participate in the evaluation of the course content and presentation as well as the distance learning program as a whole.
• To return course materials, as required, according to established schedule.
• To follow all relevant university guidelines, including the code of conduct and academic honesty policy.
• For courses requiring computer usage, to read and adhere to the University of North Alabama’s Information Technologies Acceptable Use Statement and other related university policies.
• To observe copyright laws and guidelines as they pertain to the Internet, the World Wide Web, software, and the use and reproduction of materials.

1.4.11 Instructional Services Librarian, Collier Library
• To facilitate the provision of library services and resources for distance learning faculty and students.
• To encourage development of technologically advanced remote access to library resources.
• To coordinate development and provision of appropriate information technology instruction for distance learners.
• To coordinate the planning, evaluation, and improvement of library services for distance learners.
• To promote use of library resources among distance learning faculty and students.

1.4.12 Distance Learning Advisory Committee
The Distance Learning Advisory Committee is a task committee developed for the purposes of Shared Governance at UNA. This committee’s charge incorporates, but is not limited to:
• To advise the Coordinator of Distance Learning, the Director of Educational Technology Services, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs concerning policies and procedures for the Distance Learning Program.
• To identify issues and make recommendations concerning the development and implementation of quality distance learning courses and programs.
• To establish the acceptable format and guidelines for distance learning courses placed on the Web.
• To keep abreast of current trends, laws, issues, and technological developments in distance education.
• To inform the university community on matters related to distance education.
• To ensure compliance with accreditation criteria.

1.5 NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Section 4.4.3 Curriculum Development of the Faculty Handbook indicates that proposed distance learning courses and programs are to follow the same procedural, needs assessment, and recommendation path as traditional offerings for approval. Furthermore, the Handbook notes that format delivery changes of approved existing courses and programs should appear on the agenda of the Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Council as “an information item only.”
Among the factors considered in determining courses to be offered through the Distance Learning Program are: student demand; availability of interested, qualified faculty and staff; accreditation issues; economic feasibility; course adaptability; course uniqueness; accessibility of appropriate library services, learning resources, and/or laboratory equipment; appropriate contractual agreements; timeliness of topic; and technological capabilities.

Demographic information on the students enrolled in the Distance Learning Program is compiled regularly and analyzed for use in planning. Additional information is collected via an online Interest Survey form.

### 1.6 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Distance learning courses are offered concurrently with the regular semester schedule utilized for on-campus classes at the University of North Alabama. Distance Learning classes are listed in each semester’s *Schedule of Classes & Exams*. Individual course syllabi indicate significant dates, exam schedules, etc. Copies of syllabi are kept on file in the Office of Distance Learning.

### 1.7 COURSE INTEGRITY

The same policies concerning admissions requirements, scholastic standards, academic honesty, dropping and adding classes, repetition of courses, incomplete designations, withdrawal from a course or from the University, classification, grading, grievance procedures, credits, degree completion, and honors apply to distance learning as they do for campus-based classes. The goals and objectives, and skills and competencies are the same for distance learning courses as for those offered on campus. Faculty apply the same standards for coursework and grading for both on-campus and distance learning courses.

Distance learning courses must maintain sufficient enrollment to be taught and are subject to the same course deletion policies as are all courses offered by the University.

### 1.8 STUDENTS

All students taking credit-bearing courses in the Distance Learning Program must first be admitted to the University. Students in degree programs must meet the same entrance and completion requirements as on-campus students in those programs.

Students are referred to the University of North Alabama Mane Card Office to obtain university identification cards.

### 1.9 IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS

The student who registers for an online course must be the same individual who completes the coursework and receives the course credit; this is verified through the use of a secure login and password. Each university student is issued a unique user name
(created by the UNA Portal system) which also provides authenticated access to other systems (student information system, course management system, etc.) A secure login and password is required to access the student’s account, including the course homepage.

1.10 TRANSFERABILITY

Credits for academic courses earned in distance learning courses apply to UNA degrees and are readily transferable to most other universities.

1.11 STUDENT RECORDS

The University maintains students’ educational records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (Buckley Amendment). The Act protects the student’s privacy and allows students to challenge their educational records should they be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate. This protection extends to distance learning students. (See the UNA Student Handbook for additional details describing records kept, release of records, process for reviewing, etc.)

1.12 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

For the resolution of disputes regarding academic matters, the same grievance procedures are available to distance learning students as to on-campus students. (See the UNA Student Handbook.)

1.13 MARKETING

Distance education students are recruited in a variety of ways—through brochures, cooperative agreements with other institutions and organizations, contacts with student advisors, listings in the schedule of classes, advertisements in Continuing Education publications, activities of the Office of University Relations (press releases, etc.) and the University’s web page as well as social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Emphasis is placed on meeting student demands and interests for high quality, convenient programming delivered to eligible students supported by appropriate academic support services.

1.14 FINANCIAL AID

Students taking distance learning classes for academic credit must meet the same eligibility requirements for financial aid as those taking on-campus classes. Financial aid recipients must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress. (See the University of North Alabama Catalog and the University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog for details.)

1.15 EVALUATION

Courses offered via Distance Learning are subject to the same strict quality standards as those provided on-campus.
All courses are evaluated through various methods by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Educational Technology Services, the Coordinator of Distance Learning, the campus curriculum committee (for new academic courses), some accrediting bodies, participating students and faculty. Responsibility for the quality of distance learning courses rests with the University of North Alabama.

1.15.1 Evaluation by Students

The Distance Learning Program is evaluated every semester to assess the view of students regarding both the quality of instruction and the quality of the distance learning program as a whole. Student input is solicited using a course evaluation form administered at the conclusion of each course. This instrument seeks student reaction concerning organization and presentation of the course content, interaction with the faculty member, interaction with the distance learning system (ease of use, adequacy of facilities, and interaction with personnel), access to supplemental resources, reasons for enrollment in distance learning, comparison of the quality of distance learning courses with that of on-campus classes, and suggestions for improvement. Results are then analyzed and utilized in the planning process--both by the individual faculty member and the Distance Learning Program staff.

For classes in the College of Arts & Sciences, the College of Education, and undergraduate classes in the College of Business, the questionnaires are initially returned to the Distance Learning Office for preliminary compilation and then forwarded to the Office of Institutional Research Planning and Assessment (OIRPA) for analysis and compilation of comparative data. The OIRPA provides copies of questionnaire results to the academic Deans who forward the results to distance learning faculty in their college. (Classes in the College of Nursing and graduate classes in the College of Business follow a similar procedure, however those evaluations do not originate in the Distance Learning Office and are not returned to DL.)

1.15.2 Evaluation of Student Performance

In conjunction with faculty members who have taught and/or are teaching in the Distance Learning Program, the Distance Learning Advisory Committee is charged with the responsibility of studying and making recommendations about procedures for the assessment and evaluation of student performance. The Committee is also responsible for developing recommendations that outline the University’s expected educational results and how these results are to be ascertained for all distance learning activities.

1.15.3 Evaluation by Faculty

Participating faculty are surveyed periodically by the Office of Distance Learning to assess their perceptions of the Distance Learning Program, including personal effectiveness in utilizing the technology, appropriateness of different teaching methods for distance instruction, access to support resources, success of distance learning students as compared to on-campus students, effectiveness of interactions with the Distance Learning Program staff, and suggestions for improvement. Results are then analyzed by
the Office of Distance Learning and utilized in the planning process. Additionally, distance learning faculty meet each semester to discuss issues related to the effectiveness of the program.

1.15.4 Program Evaluation

To ensure that online classes meet the same rigorous standards of face-to-face classes, and to provide continuity of content organization for all online classes, faculty are encouraged to complete the Online Course Checklist each semester prior to offering a course online. Factors reviewed are the currency and relevance of the course content, instructional design of the course, resource materials used, the appropriateness of the delivery system used, needed revisions, faculty and student evaluations, and the level of success in achieving appropriate educational outcomes. If the decision is made to discontinue a particular distance learning course, all content in the various formats is to be erased or otherwise destroyed.

1.15.5 Goal Evaluation

In accordance with the University’s Plan for Institutional Effectiveness, early in the fall semester of each academic year, a subcommittee of the Distance Learning Advisory Committee reviews the mission statement and written goals of the Distance Learning Program and makes recommendations concerning continuance or revision of these goal statements.

1.15.6 Future Evaluation Plans

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee is charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining a plan for collection of data regarding distance learning activities, including the statistics to be kept, the analyses to be performed, and the reporting mechanisms to be used. Factors considered are how to record and compare student retention rates, how to use the data in the planning and evaluation process, how to evaluate the data collecting activities, and how the plan ties into the overall university institutional effectiveness program.

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee is also responsible for recommending the review process to be used to determine if the delivery systems, instructional design, and resource materials being used are appropriate for the programs offered, as well as the means for determining if the University is providing a sound learning environment for distance learning students and if the technology being used is enhancing student learning.

2. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM PERSONNEL POLICIES
2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama is responsible for approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools or colleges through which the curriculum is administered; and the extent to which the University should offer distance learning programs.

Organizationally, the Distance Learning Program and personnel are under the supervision of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. (See Appendix A for the Organizational Chart.) The Distance Learning Advisory Committee is a standing university committee concerned with monitoring and recommending policies and procedures for the University’s distance learning program. The committee consists of the Director of Educational Technology Services; two faculty members from each of the Colleges of Business, Education, and Nursing and Allied Health; four faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences; one librarian; one member from Enrollment Management; two faculty members elected by the Faculty Senate; two members of the student body selected by the Student Government Association; and such other employees of the University that the President may appoint. This committee reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The responsibilities of all key positions involved in the Distance Learning Program are outlined in the Academic Policies section of this policy manual. Resumes indicating the qualifications of these persons are on file in Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and in the Office of Human Resources and Affirmative Action.

2.2 FACULTY

The faculty approved to teach in the Distance Learning Program are selected based on interest, qualifications, and adaptability of course content for distance learning delivery methods. These faculty meet the same criteria as teachers for campus-based courses in the areas of academic credentials, workloads, and accessibility to students. Resumes for distance learning faculty, which verify qualifications for teaching their particular courses, are on file in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Priority for teaching distance learning courses is given to full-time faculty. If utilized, adjunct faculty must be reviewed and approved as possessing a combination of appropriate academic credentials and experience in the discipline in which the course is being taught.

Any faculty member developing a distance learning course is given first priority in teaching that course through the Distance Learning Program. Another faculty member may use a faculty member’s course materials only if written approval is obtained from the faculty member who developed those materials.

2.2.1 Workload

The development and teaching of distance learning courses is part of the faculty member’s workload. In an event where an overload is created, the department chair will complete an Overload Form for the faculty member and forward it through the appropriate chain of command. If a distance learning course will be taught by an adjunct
faculty member, a Personnel Action Form should be completed, again forwarding it through the appropriate chain of command.

2.2.2 Faculty Expenses

Faculty may incur expenses directly related to distance learning activities—such as long distance phone charges, postage, and mileage for travel to off-campus sites. In order for the appropriate budget to be charged, faculty must obtain prior approval from the appropriate department chairperson before such expenditures can be made.

2.2.3 Faculty-Student Interaction

It is essential that distance learning courses provide an adequate system of interaction between teacher and students. Each faculty member must provide adequate means of communication with distance education students, indicating communication options on the course syllabus and emphasizing these in class presentations. Course instructors might provide students with phone numbers and office hours, fax numbers, post office addresses, and/or with their e-mail address for individual private discussions. In cases where there are class meetings (such as interactive compressed video), a period of time before or after class or during a break may be used to discuss more general concerns of distance learning students. The Office of Distance Learning maintains copies of syllabi and other records of communication options for the individual distance learning faculty. Since regular and timely feedback from course instructor to student is crucial for the success of the distance learning program, faculty must provide an appropriate amount of feedback to distance learning students.

2.2.4 Faculty Development and Support

Faculty development and support are key to the long-term success of the distance learning program. Without the requisite skills and resources to adapt to new teaching and learning environments, faculty will be unable to respond to the demands of the distance learning program. By accepting assignment to teach a distance learning course, the faculty member agrees to participate as necessary in training sessions (available online and in person) regarding using electronic media, promoting student interaction, and managing situations unique to the delivery of distance education.

In support of the needs of distance learning faculty, the Office of Educational Technology Services provides instructional programs and access to the necessary technical and communication resources to facilitate faculty development of skills in classroom management and technology-based instructional design. The University seeks to provide support in such areas as instructional design, video production, graphics production, access to authoring tools, and other computer-based resources. Information on effective instructional strategies is included in faculty training and support materials.

Additionally, distance learning faculty meet together periodically to discuss issues related to the effectiveness of the program.
2.2.5 Faculty Evaluation

Faculty are evaluated according to the guidelines presented in the UNA Faculty Handbook. These procedures include both course evaluations by students and goal evaluations handled within the individual departments.

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee will review regularly the Distance Learning Faculty and Student Evaluation Forms to assure compliance with the university’s evaluation procedures and the gathering of appropriate data.

2.3 DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM STAFF

2.3.1 Evaluation

The interaction of the Distance Learning staff with students and faculty members is evaluated regularly through the distance learning course evaluation forms. Additionally, all staff members are evaluated annually using the standard procedure described in the UNA Staff Handbook. Administrators as well as staff members are evaluated. These evaluations are used to support professional development planning, performance improvement, and occasionally, in determining merit salary increases.

3. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES POLICIES

It is important that the Distance Learning Program and/or individual courses provide students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty and student interaction, prerequisite technological competencies and skills, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic and student support services, financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies. Much of this information is supplied via the university catalogs (undergraduate and graduate), individual course syllabi, the UNA Web page, the Library Services Web page and through other printed literature.

For specific information about tuition and fees, students should consult the Office of Student Accounts.

3.1 ADMISSION

Distance learning students are subject to the same admission requirements as traditional on-campus students. (See the University of North Alabama Catalog and University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog.) Admission criteria help ensure that students possess the appropriate background, knowledge, and technical skills required for undertaking a particular course or program.
3.2 REGISTRATION

Registration policies and procedures are found in the University of North Alabama Catalog, the University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog, and in the Schedule of Classes & Exams.

3.3 ADVISEMENT

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are entitled to student services, including advisement. Information concerning academic advisement is provided in both the printed versions of the University of North Alabama Catalog and the University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog and through the University’s web page. These resources provide rules and guidelines for all students enrolled at the University of North Alabama.

Advisement is required prior to registration. If a distance learning student has no assigned advisor, the Coordinator of Distance Learning will arrange for one. Academic department chairpersons and college deans assist in the advising of distance learning students.

3.4 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Information concerning orientation, course and degree offerings, financial aid, academic advising, library services, UNA student regulations and policies, health services, disabled student services, and campus events is available through the University’s web page.

If a distance learning student needs individual assistance, the Coordinator of Distance Learning can direct his or her inquiries, or students may directly contact the appropriate university department.

Students who are enrolled in online classes only are not typically charged the health fee; online only students have the option of paying the health fee if they want to have access to health or counseling services. (Students who are enrolled in both online and face-to-face classes are required to pay the health fee.)

3.5 FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid for distance learners is governed by the same rules and regulations as for on-campus students. For more information, see the University of North Alabama Catalog and the University of North Alabama Graduate Studies Catalog.

3.6 ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICES AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

Library services are provided to distance learners through a variety of means, including the libraries web page, and through one-on-one contact with librarians.

More detailed information is made available through the library web page, which is publicized to the distance learning faculty and students. Additional information about conducting library research at a distance, requesting materials through interlibrary loan,
borrowing privileges, etc. may be obtained by contacting the Instructional Services Librarian, (256) 765-4466, or calling the Collier Library Reference Desk at (256) 765-4469.

Remote access is provided to the web-based online catalog, to numerous licensed databases, and to such services as interlibrary loan and Ask a Librarian. Library instruction opportunities are available on campus and are also provided via the Research Consultation Service. (See the ACRL Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services.)

3.7 MATERIALS DELIVERY

Delivery of library resources is addressed in the distance learning section of the library web page.

Course material is available through the appropriate Course Management System. Students may also log into the CMS through their UNA Portal account under the My Courses tab.

Distance Learning students are notified how to access their classes through the Distance Learning website, through general campus announcements (on the UNA Portal website), through e-mail sent to students registered in each class, and by printed information in the Schedule of Classes.

The Distance Learning Office and ETS personnel are available to help students access materials and to assist instructors as needed with distribution of supplemental material (DVDs, CDs, etc.)

3.8 COMPUTER SERVICES

All UNA students, including those enrolled in distance learning classes, are assigned a UNA Portal account. This provides e-mail capabilities, including online contact with faculty and other university personnel. Any activities conducted over a UNA Internet account are subject to the University’s policies as contained in the University of North Alabama Information Technologies Acceptable Use Statement and to state and federal law.

3.9 STUDENT TRAINING

Students enrolled in Distance Learning classes have the same individual responsibility for coursework as students in “regular” classes, but because of the special needs of Distance Learning students, some additional help is provided. FAQs, tutorials, and other information is provided online.

Specific course information and coping strategies are provided in the course information section for every Internet class, and at the time of the initial class meeting for videoconference classes.
In addition, the Office of Distance Learning has produced, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Support Services, a series of “Study Skills” videos which are held on reserve in Collier Library and in the Learning Resources Center. The videos provide useful information for students who may be returning to the university after several years’ absence from the classroom, a circumstance which is common for Distance Learning students. Among the videos are (1) Study Skills (an overview), (2) Note-taking, (3) Time Management, and (4) Focus on Finals (test-taking strategies).

Distance Learning personnel work to establish a relationship with the students through personal contact, through telephone calls, and through correspondence via mail and e-mail. Students are encouraged to visit, telephone, or write the Office of Distance Learning if they have any questions about their class. Distance Learning personnel always respond promptly to student inquiries, either by providing assistance directly or by directing the students to the appropriate resource on or off campus.

3.10 TEST PROCTORING

Faculty members are encouraged to utilize the class management program purchased by the University to administer online tests, however, other options are available and may be arranged through the Office of Distance Learning. Instructors wishing to use proctored exams are encouraged to contact the Office of Distance Learning.

Students who are unable to come to campus to take proctored exams may be allowed to arrange for an off-campus proctor. Testing materials are sent directly to an approved proctor, or uploaded to an authorized online remote proctoring service. (The distance learning student does not have access to the materials at any time except under the supervision of the designated proctor.)

For videoconference classes, tests are proctored by the usual room monitor for off-campus sites. This monitor may be a university graduate assistant, a high school teacher’s aide, or a designated room coordinator.

3.11 OFFICE OF DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Disability Support Services to initiate the process to develop an accommodation plan. This accommodation plan will not be applied retroactively. Students needing assistance should contact Disability Support Services (256-765-4214).

3.12 ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Distance learning students access the library’s resources and services through Collier Library’s webpage. This links users to the library’s electronic resources, including databases, e-books, electronic journals, course reserves, and online government publications. Distance learners can request materials not owned by UNA through the Interlibrary Loan service. Distance education students can also receive assistance by telephone or email. They may also request a phone appointment (research consultation) or chat session within their classroom management program.

The Center for Academic Advising and Retention Services provides academic programming for orientation sessions, advising assistance, tutoring, and academic counseling geared toward enhancing student success. These services and facilities are available to students enrolled in the Distance Learning Program. The UNA Center for Writing Excellence offers individual or group consultations, usually face-to-face, but also online, for those students who do not visit campus because of distance education classes. The Center's writing consultants will assist undergraduate and graduate students with any written homework assignment, from any course, in any major. They will even help with resumes, cover letters, graduate school application essays, and personal writing, such as poetry or fiction.

3.13 CAREER SERVICES

Students needing assistance with employment questions (career counseling, resume preparation, job placement, etc.) may contact the Office of Career Planning and Development directly.

4. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM

FISCAL POLICIES

4.1 TUITION

Distance learning students enrolled in approved online degree programs are regarded as on-campus students. No out-of-state fees are incurred for students in those programs.

Students enrolled in distance learning classes, unless they are enrolled in an approved online degree program are subject to the same fees as on-campus students, including (if applicable) out-of-state tuition.

4.2 CONTRACTS

All employment contracts for teaching in the Distance Learning Program follow normal university procedures as outlined in the UNA Faculty Handbook.
4.3 BUDGET
The Distance Learning Program at the University of North Alabama is financed through the same budgeting process used for other university programs. The Distance Learning Program receives a separate budget each year.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM
LEGAL POLICIES

5.1 FAIR USE
Distance learning courses that involve the performance and display of audiovisual and other copyrighted works are guided by the Educational Fair Use Guidelines for Distance Learning.

5.2 COPYRIGHT
See Faculty Handbook for the University’s copyright and patent policy.

5.3 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
See the UNA Faculty Handbook for a copy of the University’s Policy on Faculty Produced Materials, Books, and Lab Manuals.

5.4 APPROPRIATE USE OF COMPUTER RESOURCES
Use of university-owned computer resources is governed by the University of North Alabama Information Technologies Acceptable Use Statement.

5.5 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT/CONFLICT OF INTEREST
No UNA course may be offered by a faculty member for another college, university, agency or private corporation without the written permission of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Additional guidelines concerning outside employment appear in the UNA Faculty Handbook.

General Distance Learning Policies

1. Distance Learning classes offered at the University of North Alabama will be courses produced by UNA faculty, or will be professionally produced programs licensed through the Public Broadcasting System, Adult Learning Services or some other professional organization/agency and facilitated by faculty at UNA.
2. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the appropriate faculty member(s), department head(s), and dean(s), has final authority in deciding the courses to be included in the Distance Learning Program.

3. The Distance Learning Program will be evaluated every semester to assess the view of students regarding the quality of the programming and the quality of instruction.

4. Faculty teaching in the Distance Learning Program will be surveyed periodically to assess their perceptions of the program.

5. Faculty wishing to develop a Distance Learning course will complete necessary paperwork (form available from Office of Vice President for Academic Affairs) and submit to department chair, who will approve and submit the form to the college dean. Upon approval by the college dean, the form will be held in the dean’s office until the course development has been completed according to established policy. The department chair and dean will then sign the form approving payment ($1800 for course development) and the form will be submitted to the VPAA for processing.

6. Distance Learning courses which involve the performance and display of audiovisual and other copyrighted works must adhere to the Educational Fair Use Guidelines for Distance Learning. (Copies of the guidelines are available through Educational Technology Services.)

7. Faculty developing Distance Learning courses will have first priority in teaching the courses through the Distance Learning Program whenever possible.

8. Faculty members should consult the UNA Faculty Handbook for questions concerning the University’s copyright and patent issues.

9. In addition to developing the course, the faculty member will participate as necessary in training sessions (in person, online, or a combination of the two) regarding using electronic media, promoting student interaction in Distance Learning, and managing situations unique to the delivery of Distance Education.

10. Distance Learning courses must maintain sufficient enrollment to be taught and are subject to the same course deletion policies as are all courses offered by the university.

11. Priority for teaching Distance Learning courses will be given to full-time faculty whenever possible.

12. To ensure that online classes meet the same rigorous standards of on campus classes, and to provide continuity of content organization for all online classes,
faculty are encouraged to complete the Online Course Checklist each semester prior to offering a course online.

13. If the decision is made to discontinue a particular distance learning course, all content in the various formats is to be erased or otherwise destroyed.

14. All Distance Learning courses will be conducted in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the University of North Alabama. Please refer to the current copy of the University of North Alabama Catalog and the Faculty Handbook for specific information regarding these policies.

(Approved by the Distance Learning Advisory Committee 12/10/2010)

University of North Alabama Distance Learning Policies and Procedures Manual

APPENDIX A – URLs, websites and web-based forms

Association of College and Research Libraries – Standards for Distance Learning Library Services
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning.cfm

Southern Regional Education Board’s —Principles of Good Practice for Academic Degree and Certificate Programs and Credit Courses Offered Electronically.
http://www.ecinitiatives.org/publications/principles.asp

UNA Center for Academic Advising and Retention Services
http://www.una.edu/advising/index.html

UNA Center for Writing Excellence
http://www.una.edu/writingcenter/

UNA Disability Support Services
http://www.una.edu/disability-support/

UNA Distance Learning Advisory Committee
http://www.una.edu/sharedgovernance/committee.php?c=Distance-Learning-Advisory-Committee

UNA Distance Learning – Basic Help
http://distance.una.edu/help/
UNA Distance Learning Interest Survey  
http://distance.una.edu/surveys/interest.html

UNA Distance Learning Library Services  
http://www.una.edu/library/orientation/distance/

UNA Educational Technology Services Tutorials and Guides  
http://www.una.edu/ets/tutorials.html

UNA Facebook  
http://www.facebook.com/northalabama

UNA Faculty Handbook  
http://www.una.edu/administration/handbook/

UNA General Distance Learning Policies  
http://distance.una.edu/general-policies.html

UNA Graduate Catalog  
http://www.una.edu/catalog/

UNA Health Center  
http://www.una.edu/healthservices/

UNA Office of Student Accounts  
http://www.una.edu/tuition/

UNA Organizational Charts, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
http://una.edu/humanresources/organization_charts/Org%20Chart%20MOST%20RECENT%20AVPAA.pdf

UNA Shared Governance  
http://www.una.edu/sharedgovernance/

UNA Staff Handbook  
http://www.una.edu/humanresources/staff-handbook/index.html