No off-campus courses for credit may be offered by the College District without specific prior approval of the Coordinating Board. However, the College District may offer a distance-learning course approved by the Coordinating Board with no in-state geographic restrictions if the course is within the approved curriculum of the College District. *Education Code 61.051(j)*

DEFINITIONS

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distance education is the formal education process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction. *19 TAC 4.257(8)*

DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE

A distance education course refers to a course in which a majority (more than 50 percent) of the instruction occurs when the student(s) and instructor(s) are not in the same place. Two categories of distance education courses are defined as follows:

1. Fully Distance Education Course: A course that may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test.

2. Hybrid/Blended Course: A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent) of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place.

19 TAC 4.257(9)

SELF-SUPPORTING COURSES AND PROGRAMS

Self-supporting courses and programs are academic credit courses and programs (formerly defined as extension courses or programs) whose semester credit hours are not submitted for formula funding. [See EBD] *19 TAC 4.257(24)*

APPLICABILITY OF SUBCHAPTER P

The provisions of 19 Administrative Code Chapter 4, Subchapter P (addressing approval of distance education courses and programs) apply to academic credit courses, degree and certificate programs, and self-supporting courses and programs provided by College Districts and formula-funded workforce continuing education provided by College Districts. These provisions do not apply to non-formula-funded continuing education provided by a College District. *19 TAC 4.258*

GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

With respect to distance education, College Districts shall:

1. Comply with the standards and criteria of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

2. Adhere to criteria outlined in Principles of Good Practice for Degree and Certificate Programs and Courses Offered through Distance Education.

3. Provide students academic support services appropriate for distance education, such as advising, career counseling, library, and other learning resources.

4. Report enrollments, courses, and graduates associated with distance education offerings as required by the Commissioner.

If a non-Texas resident student enrolls in regular, on-campus courses for at least one-half of the normal full-time course load as determined by the College District, the College District may report that student's fully distance education or hybrid/blended courses for formula-funding enrollments.

19 TAC 4.260

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The following standards and criteria apply to programs offered under the provisions of 19 Administrative Code, Chapter 4, Subchapter P:

1. Each program shall be within the role and mission of the College District responsible for offering the instruction and shall be on the inventory of approved programs.

2. Prior approval by the Coordinating Board may be required before a College District may offer programs in certain subject area disciplines or under other conditions specified by the Coordinating Board or the Commissioner.

3. A College District offering a degree or certificate program shall comply with the standards and criteria of any specialized accrediting agency or professional certification board.

4. Each degree program offered by distance education shall be approved by a College District's governing board or the board's institutional designee. Certification of approval shall be submitted to the Coordinating Board upon request.

5. A College District shall require that students (except for students in out-of-country programs) enrolled in a distance education degree program satisfy the same requirements for admission to the College District and the program as required of regular on-campus students. Students in degree programs to be offered collaboratively shall meet the admission standards of their home institution. Out-of-country students shall meet equivalent standards for admission into programs and shall

be assessed for academic guidance purposes in a manner determined by the admitting institution.

19 TAC 4.261

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

The following standards and criteria apply to courses offered under the provisions of 19 Administrative Code, Chapter 4, Subchapter P:

1. Each course shall be within the role and mission of the College District responsible for offering the instruction and shall be on its inventory of approved courses.
2. All courses shall meet the quality standards applicable to on-campus courses.
3. A College District shall report to the Coordinating Board, in accordance with Coordinating Board policy and procedures, all distance education courses and programs.
4. Students shall satisfy the same requirement for enrollment in an academic credit course as required of on-campus students, except that out-of-country students shall meet equivalent standards for enrollment in an academic credit course and shall be assessed for academic guidance purposes in a manner determined by the admitting institution.
5. Prior Coordinating Board approval may be required before a College District may offer programs in certain subject area disciplines or under other conditions specified by the Coordinating Board or the Commissioner.

19 TAC 4.262

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY

The following standards and criteria apply to faculty teaching in programs offered under the provisions of 19 Administrative Code, Chapter 4, Subchapter P:

1. Faculty shall be selected and evaluated by equivalent standards, review, and approval procedures used by the College District to select and evaluate faculty responsible for on-campus courses.
2. A College District shall provide training and support to enhance the added skills required of the faculty teaching courses through electronic means.
3. The supervising, monitoring, and evaluating processes for faculty shall be equivalent to those for on-campus courses.

19 TAC 4.263

DISTANCE-LEARNING MASTER PLAN

The College District, in cooperation with the Coordinating Board, shall develop a master plan for the development of distance learning and other applications of instructional electronic technology by the College District. The plan shall include recommendations for:

1. The coordination and integration of distance learning and related telecommunications activities among institutions of higher education and other public or private entities to achieve optimum efficiency and effectiveness in providing necessary services, including identification of the costs and any cost savings to be achieved by the use of distance learning and related activities such as teleconferencing or sharing resources by telecommunications;

2. The development and acquisition of distance-learning infrastructure and equipment, including its functions and capabilities, within and among institutions of higher education consistent with the missions of those institutions and the recipients of their services;

3. The establishment of uniform or compatible standards and technologies for distance learning;

4. The training of faculty and staff in the use and operation of distance-learning facilities;

5. Appropriate applications of distance learning, including the identification of the needs of the student populations to be served;

6. Policies relating to the funding for implementation and administering of distance learning, including interinstitutional funds transfers among institutions providing and receiving distance-learning services and formula-funding allocations, and recommendations for the appropriate fees for services offered through distance learning;

7. Revising regulatory policy relating to public utilities to facilitate distance learning; and

8. Any statutory or regulatory changes desirable to promote distance learning or to implement the master plan.

The plan may include any related recommendation considered appropriate, including recommendations for coordination of distance learning with other telecommunications activities and services conducted by government agencies or private entities.

Education Code 61.0771(a), (b)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To assist in the development of the plan, the Coordinating Board shall create an advisory committee consisting of experts in distance learning, including school administrators and faculty and lay persons. The committee shall include a representative of each university system and each public senior college or university under a separate governing board, and representatives of public junior colleges, public health science centers, centers created under Chapter 106, Health and Safety Code, medical schools, public technical institutes, and independent institutions of higher education. The advisory committee shall include at least three faculty members who teach a distance-learning course. The appointment of an employee of an institution of higher education to the committee must be approved by the College President or Chancellor of that institution.

The advisory committee may request the cooperation or participation of state agencies, public broadcasting stations, representatives of the local and long-distance telecommunications industries, representatives of federally qualified health centers, and representatives providing distance-learning equipment or services, including computer hardware and software, in preparing the master plan.

Education Code 61.0771(c), (d)

INSTITUTIONAL PLAN

Prior to offering any distance education courses or programs for the first time, a College District shall submit an Institutional Plan for Distance Education to the Coordinating Board for approval. The Commissioner shall provide guidelines for development of the report and a schedule for any periodic submission of updated reports.

College District academic and administrative policies shall reflect a commitment to maintain the quality of distance-education, off-campus, and on-campus extension courses and programs in accordance with the provisions of 19 Administrative Code Chapter 4, Subchapter P. An Institutional Report shall conform to Coordinating Board guidelines and criteria of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in effect at the time of the Report's approval. These criteria shall include provisions relating to:

1. Institutional issues
2. Educational programs
3. Faculty
4. Student support services
5. Distance-education facilities and support

19 TAC 4.259

FORMULA FUNDING

College Districts shall report distance education courses submitted for formula funding in accordance with the Coordinating Board's uniform reporting system and the provision of Subchapter P.

College Districts may submit for formula funding academic credit courses delivered by distance education to any student located in Texas or to Texas residents located out-of-state or out-of-country.

College Districts shall not submit for formula funding distance education courses taken by non- resident students who are located out-of-state or out-of-country, courses in out-of-state or out-of-country programs taken by any students, or self-supporting courses.

For courses not submitted for formula funding, College Districts shall charge fees that are equal or greater than Texas resident tuition and applicable fees and that are sufficient to cover the total cost of instruction and overhead, including administrative costs, benefits, computers and equipment, and other related costs.

FEE REPORTS

Institutions shall report fees received for self-supporting and out-of-state/country courses in accordance with general institutional accounting practices.

19 TAC 4.264