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Georgia Southern University
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Office of the President

Post Office Box 8033
Marvin Pittman Administration Building

TEL 478-5211
FAX 478-0598
TDD 871-1454

<http://welcome.georgiasouthern.edu/president/>

TO: Dr. Robert Costomiris Chair, Senate Executive Committee
FROM: Brooks A. Keel, President
DATE: February 28, 2014
SUBJECT: **February 14, 2014, Faculty Senate Recommendation:
Policy on Distance Education**

*Approved
B.A. Keel 3/3/14*

Following review of the recommendation adopted by the Faculty Senate at the February 14, 2014, Faculty Senate meeting, as provided in your memo of February 27, 2014, I have approved the motion below presented to the Senate by Dr. Robert Costomiris.

I. Purpose

This document establishes a comprehensive distance education policy, which addresses the development of new distance education programs and courses and the comparability of existing distance and face-to-face courses and programs. This policy ensures consistency of courses and programs in content, rigor, and overall educational quality, regardless of delivery mode. It is intended to address both existing and future programs and courses and to ensure continued comparability over time.

In support of its mission to create "learning experiences of the highest quality," Georgia Southern University is committed to ensuring that the growing number of distance learning courses and programs it offers meets the same high level of quality and rigor as face-to-face classes and programs. Georgia Southern online students experience learner-centered teaching and engaging online classroom environments, which use technology to enhance learning and student learning outcomes.

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II. Policy Statement

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Georgia Southern University recognizes that for distance education to be effective, courses cannot simply be moved from the face-to-face classroom into the online classroom. Rather, face-to-face courses must be carefully and intentionally adapted so that they make the best use of online resources, pedagogy, and technical support. In light of this, faculty assume primary responsibility for and exercise oversight over distance education content, and the development and teaching of distance education courses will proceed with a focus on content, learning outcomes, and online teaching excellence.

Distance education courses and programs, including those offered exclusively online, have the same rigor and quality as face-to-face courses and programs, which is established by adhering to Georgia Southern and University System of Georgia course and program approval processes and the SACSCOC approval process. Annual departmental reports (See "Procedures" below) and annual program assessment reports ensure an ongoing process for maintaining comparability and examining quality. Available technological services enable faculty to effectively deliver and students to fully engage with course and program material. Georgia Southern University provides distance education students with the same range of academic and student support services that support the courses and programs offered. Details at: <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/gsuonline/>.

Once courses and programs have been approved through Georgia Southern and University System of Georgia course approval processes, faculty members who will be engaged in distance education participate in a training process administered through the Centers for Teaching and Technology. This training prepares them to develop and teach online employing sound assessment and pedagogical practices, collaborative design, and appropriate technology using the university-mandated LMS (Learning Management System). For courses currently offered online that have not undergone the curriculum approval process, departments will submit the appropriate curriculum forms to obtain institutional curriculum approval.

III. Exclusions (if applicable)

Consortial agreements are governed by Georgia Southern's Policy on MOU's and SACSCOC Policy on Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Awards. Online programs/courses that are taught by Georgia Southern faculty and are part of consortial agreements with other institutions must be taught within the framework of the Georgia Southern Distance Education Policy and procedures. However, classes/programs being offered to Georgia Southern students by other institutions may not comply with this policy.

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gm

c: Dr. Jean Bartels
Dr. Diana Cone
Ms. Candace Griffith
Ms. Maura Copeland



Policy on Distance Education

Area: Division of Academic Affairs
Subject: *Policy on Distance Education*
Applies To: University Community
Sources:

Number: 327
Issued:
Revised:
Updated:

1. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) *Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement*
2. SACSCOC *Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*
3. University System of Georgia *Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 3.3.3, Instruction Offered Externally*
4. University System of Georgia *Academic and Students Affairs Handbook, Section 2.3.7, External Degrees: Off-Campus & Online Instructional Delivery*
5. University System of Georgia *Academic and Students Affairs Handbook, Section 2.3.7.2, Distance Learning Approval Procedures*

Responsible Party: Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Page(s): Page 1 of 3

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Approved by the Faculty Senate 2/14/2014

**OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

P.O. Box 8022
Marvin Pittman Administration Building
Room 2012

TEL 478-5258
FAX 478-5279
TDD 478-1654

TO: President Brooks Keel

FROM: Jean E. Bartels, PhD, RN 
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: February 27, 2014

SUBJ: **February 14, 2014, Faculty Senate Recommendation:
Policy on Distance Education**

I recommend approval of the motion presented by Dr. Robert Costomiris to the Faculty Senate at the February 14, 2014, meeting as follows:

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pc: Dr. Robert Costomiris
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Office of the Faculty Senate

PO Box 8033-1
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fsoffice@georgiasouthern.edu

TEL 478-5144
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FILE COPY
*forwarded to
a. Bartels for
her recommendation
2/27/2014*

<https://inside.georgiasouthern.edu/President/facultysenate/default.aspx>

TO: Dr. Brooks A. Keel, President

FROM: Robert Costomiris (CLASS) Chair, Senate Executive Committee *rc by Ginger Malphrus*

DATE: February 27, 2014

SUBJECT: **February 14, 2014 Faculty Senate Recommendation
Policy on Distance Education**

I am pleased to report that the Senate recommends approval of the motion below presented by Robert Costomiris at the February 14, 2014, meeting.

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