

NASULGC-SLOAN NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ONLINE LEARNING
Benchmarking Study Interview Questions

4B. Academic Quality and Effectiveness - Assessment of Learning Outcomes

There are significant differences between traditional face-to-face and modern technology-mediated higher education. The techniques that make a faculty member particularly successful and effective as a face-to-face instructor are not necessarily transferable to the online environment. Course design and development must be driven by the exigencies of the particular delivery technology chosen by an institution. Successful online distance learning is not intuitive; students require certain specific skill sets in order to succeed and get the most benefit from online courses. Finally, the assessment of student learning outcomes in the online distance learning environment poses specific challenges to institutions. The Commission is seeking insights into effective approaches related to the quality of online distance learning courses and programs, specifically: the assessment of student learning outcomes in online distance courses, and how such assessment differs from that of face-to-face courses.

- 1) Do students evaluate online distance courses the same way they evaluate face-to-face courses? Please explain the process.
- 2) How are students made aware of the student learning objectives for their off-campus online and face-to-face courses?
- 3) Are the student learning objectives the same for off-campus online and face-to-face sections of the same courses? If not, why not?
- 4) How are student learning objectives assessed in online distance education courses? Is it the same or different for face-to-face courses? Please explain.
- 5) Are there differences in institutional assessment of online distance courses and face-to-face courses? If so, describe.
- 6) Are you using assessment techniques and/or measures for online distance courses that you consider to be especially innovative? If so, describe.
- 7) Who is responsible for assessment of individual online distance courses? What are the potential impacts of positive or negative assessments?
- 8) In the mind of you and/or your institution, is the quality of online comparable to that of face-to-face?
- 9) How do you evaluate faculty members teaching online distance courses? Is it the same or different for face-to-face courses? Please explain.
- 10) For purposes of tenure and promotion, are online distance courses treated differently than face-to-face courses? If so, what are the differences?

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- 11) Would you change any current policies or practices concerning assessment of student and/or faculty performance in online distance courses? If so, please explain.
- 12) In the overall area of assessment of student and faculty performance in online distance learning, what do you see changing in the future?
- 13) If you could select one element as your institution's best practice in its distance learning activities, what would it be? What are you or others doing at your institution that could be shared and used by other institutions? Your response does not have to relate specifically to the area we have just discussed.