

Message from the Accrediting Commission Chair

Dear Colleague:

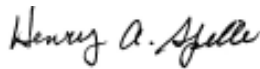
On behalf of the members and staff of the Accrediting Commission, we welcome your interest in the nationally recognized work of the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council.

Since 1955, the Accrediting Commission has established and monitored high standards of educational and administrative excellence in the distance education community.

All of us on the Accrediting Commission take our work seriously. We are anxious to assure all prospective institutional applicants, distance study students, governmental bodies and the public, that our goal is to conduct the finest accrediting program in the world.

After reading this brochure, if you desire to have complete information on how to apply for accreditation, please order the book, *DETC Accreditation Handbook*. An order form is bound into the back of this brochure for your convenience.

We welcome your questions on our program, and we invite you to write or call the Commission's staff for further information.



Henry A. Spille
Chair

DETC Accreditation Overview

Each year an estimated 5 million Americans pursue education or training through what is known as distance education. Distance education, which is also known as distance study, e-learning online education, correspondence study, home study, independent study, and other various terms, has existed in America for more than a century. Yet, few teachers, counselors, students and prospective students have an accurate picture of distance education. Even fewer people understand the meaning and purpose of accreditation.

Today, an estimated 300 private institutions and over 4,000 colleges and other institutions offer distance education programs. While many programs are worthwhile, some are not. This booklet is designed to help prospective students, counselors, public agencies and institutions better understand distance education accreditation and how the accreditation procedures of the DETC Accrediting Commission work. This booklet will answer many of the questions raised about distance study accreditation.

What is Distance Education?

Distance education is enrollment and study with an educational institu-

tion that provides lesson materials prepared in a sequential and logical order for study by a student on his or her own. When each lesson or segment is completed, the student submits to the institution via mail or electronically the assigned work for correction, grading, comment, and subject matter guidance by qualified instructors and faculty. Corrected assignments are returned to the student. This exchange provides for a personalized student-teacher relationship.

Distance education courses vary greatly in scope, level and length. Some have a few lessons and require only weeks to complete while others have a hundred or more assignments requiring three or four years of conscientious study. Accredited courses of study lead to credentials ranging from certificates of completion and certification of skills to academic degrees.

In recent years, electronic technology has played a significant role in transforming the "traditional" distance education institution into a dynamic, interactive distance learning institution using toll-free telephone lines, home microcomputers, the Internet, video devices and other modern technological innovations. The future for distance education promises to be exciting!

A student planning to enroll in an educational institution wants to know something of the quality of that institution. Most institutions do just what their advertising and promotional literature claim they can do. A few do not.

How can a serious student tell which is which? The United States has rejected the idea of centralized governmental control over educational systems and has instead adopted a system of *voluntary accreditation*.

Well over half a century ago, both educators and the public began to realize that significant differences existed within the same general class of educational institutions. This realization resulted in the growth of accrediting bodies that used the judgment of peers as a measure of educational quality.

During the early part of this century, several of the leading figures in distance education realized that problems existed in the field. After a special Carnegie Corporation study in the 1920's verified their analysis, they decided that the time had come for establishing standards for ethical institutions to follow.

The Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), then the National Home Study Council, was organized in 1926 as a voluntary association of correspondence institutions to promote "sound educational standards and ethical business practices within the distance educa-

tion field." In 1952, the Council decided further improvements should be made in the procedures used to examine and approve distance education institutions. A system of accreditation seemed the best solution. As the planning progressed, individuals in the U.S. Department of Education, the National Commission on Accrediting, and other accrediting associations, assisted the Council.

The DETC's independent Accrediting Commission was established in 1955. Four years later the Commission was listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a "nationally recognized accrediting agency" under the terms of Public Law. The procedures and standards have been continuously refined and improved.

The official recognition of the Commission by the U.S. Department of Education has been reviewed periodically since 1955 following extensive re-evaluations of its activities and procedures. The Commission was most recently reviewed in 2001.

In 1973, the Commission received the recognition of the National Commission on Accrediting and became the first agency accrediting private institutions—most of them proprietary—to receive such recognition. In 1975, the Accrediting Commission became a charter member of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, (COPA), which became the Commission on Recognition of

Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA) in 1994, and in 1997 became the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a non-governmental body recognizing and coordinating the activities of accrediting agencies throughout the United States.

The procedures and standards have been continuously refined and improved over the past five decades.

In 1994, the National Home Study Council changed its name to the Distance Education and Training Council. Today, the DETC Accrediting Commission is recognized as the accrediting body for both private and non-private distance education institutions and accredits both non-degree and academic degree programs from the Associates through the first professional degree levels.

Who are the Commissioners?

Instruction through distance education methods is vastly different than instruction via the “traditional” classroom method. Because of this, it is important that some members of the Accrediting Commission have an in-depth knowledge of distance education institutions. On the other

hand, because accreditation is a public trust, it is vital that public members provide the objectivity and impartiality that such a trust demands. The membership of the DETC Accrediting Commission consists of three senior executives and two academics of accredited distance education institutions, and four Commissioners who represent the public.

What are the Purposes and Functions of Accreditation?

The word accreditation has acquired many shades of meaning over the years. *Simply stated, accreditation is certification by a recognized body that an institution has voluntarily undergone a comprehensive study and examination, which has demonstrated that the institution does in fact perform the functions that it claims: that the institution has set educational goals for students who enroll, and furnishes materials and services that enable students to meet these stated goals.*

Distance education accreditation is an institution-wide source of national accreditation that covers all distance education courses offered by an institution. It is unique in American accreditation because it is one based upon a method of instruction rather than educational level or subject matter discipline. It covers all

(continued on page 6)

Public Members of the Commission



Henry A. Spille, *Commission Chair*,
Vice President (Retired), American
Council on Education

Dorothy C. Fenwick, Executive
Director Emeritus, Commission
on Recognition of Postsecondary
Accreditation



Jan M. Larson, Managing
Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers

David W. Stewart, Director of Program
Development, Center for Adult Learning
and Educational Credentials (Retired),
American Council on Education



Institution Members of the Commission



Brook Ellis, Vice President of Education, Gemological Institute of America



Gary M. Keisling, President, Professional Career Development Institute



Marianne E. Mount, Executive Vice President, The Catholic Distance University



Gary L. Seevers, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Global University



Thomas R. Stuart, *Commission Vice Chair*, President, Art Instruction Schools

programs, courses, and endeavors of an institution, including degree, non-degree, vocational and avocational programs. Unlike regional or specialized accrediting agencies, the DETC Accrediting Commission provides distance education institutions with a single source of nationally recognized accreditation.

The DETC Accrediting Commission provides distance education institutions with a single source of national recognition.

Most experts agree that accreditation is a “process whereby an association or agency grants public recognition to an institution or program as having met certain established qualifications or standards as determined through initial and periodic evaluations. Increasingly, accreditation also implies stimulation toward improvement beyond the minimum standards specified by the accrediting body.”

Historically and currently, accreditation may be said to:

- foster excellence in education through the development of standards for assessing educational effectiveness;
- encourage improvement through

continuous self-evaluation and planning; and

- assure the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution has both clearly defined and appropriate objectives, maintains conditions under which their achievement can be reasonably expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them, and can be expected to continue to do so.

What are DETC Standards for Accreditation?

The fact that a distance education institution is accredited means that the DETC Accrediting Commission has determined that the institution offers quality instruction and meets the standards established by the Commission. The standards require that an institution:

- have a clearly defined mission statement and institutional objectives;
- state its instructional objectives clearly and offer sufficiently comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date, educationally sound instructional materials and methods to meet these announced objectives;
- provide adequate examination services and attention to individual differences;

- have a qualified faculty;
- enroll only students who can be expected to benefit from the instruction;
- maintain adequate student services;
- have students who express satisfaction with the instruction received;
- be honest in its advertising and promotional materials;
- carefully select, train, and supervise its field representatives;
- show financial resources adequate to carry out all obligations to students;
- use a satisfactory tuition refund policy;
- maintain student records properly;
- demonstrate two consecutive years of sound and ethical operation as a distance study institution.

The *DETC Policy for Degree Programs* expands on these standards. Furthermore, the accreditation process must be repeated at intervals of not more than five years.

Which Institutions are Eligible for Accreditation?

Application for accreditation from the DETC Accrediting Commission

may be made at any time by any private or non-private *bona fide* distance education institution with two consecutive years of sound and ethical operating experience.

The Accrediting Commission is aided in its decisions by the extensive work done before a Commission meeting. The process of accreditation begins when an institution submits an application to the Commission's Washington, D.C. office. Here a determination is made of the institution's eligibility on two points: (1) whether it has been in actual operation for a period of at least two consecutive years immediately prior to accreditation (the two year period begins with the date of the first enrollment); and, (2) whether the applicant is in fact a "*bona fide* distance education institution," defined by the Accrediting Commission as an educational institution which:

- formally enrolls students and maintains student records;
- retains a qualified faculty to service students;
- transmits to students organized instructional materials;
- provides continuous two-way communication on student work, e.g., evaluating students' examinations, projects or answering queries, with prompt feedback given to students;
- offers courses of instruction which must be studied predomi-

nantly at a distance from the institution; and

- properly licensed.

The Accrediting Commission does not accept applications from institutions that offer distance study academic degree programs beyond the first professional degree level.

How Does Accreditation Work?

The accreditation process has eight steps:

1. Obtain Handbook and Review Application

Since accreditation is a voluntary process, each institution must decide whether to seek accreditation or not. The institution begins the process by obtaining and studying the *DETC Accreditation Handbook*, and the CEO carefully reviews the “Application for Accreditation.” The *DETC Accreditation Handbook* provides complete guidance on how to undergo the accreditation process.

2. Submit Application, Fee, Course Materials and Other Information

If the institution wants to become accredited, it must make a formal application to the Commission. Application is the beginning of the chain of events that are required to

bring about a total analysis and evaluation of the institution: its policies, procedures, philosophies, objectives, functions and accomplishments. To initiate the accreditation process, the application form and a \$1,000 application fee must be submitted to the Commission. Along with the fee, 100 student names as well as the institution’s catalog and copies of state licensures must be submitted. Copies of the institution’s course materials must also be submitted as part of the accreditation process, along with catalogs, enrollment agreements and other pertinent information.

3. Surveys Students and Agencies, Review of Course Materials and Begins SER

The Commission surveys past and present students of an institution, as well as Better Business Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, various consumer protection agencies, other accrediting agencies, and federal and state regulatory agencies for information on the educational services, business ethics, and general reputation of the institution.

The Commission requires copies of each of the courses offered by the institution. New applicants must submit two complete sets of each course for a review, applications for re-accreditation must submit one complete set. These are given to qualified subject matter specialists. As highly

qualified professionals, these individuals are usually practitioners in their fields or instructors in institutions of higher education. These specialists review the courses and evaluate them to determine whether the objectives announced by the institution can be accomplished by the course.

The instructional materials and study guides are checked to make certain that they are complete, up-to-date, and accurate in content. Any instructional aids, including visuals, tools, laboratory equipment and devices, and “kits,” are evaluated to determine if they are relevant and worthwhile learning experiences. Each subject specialist submits to the Accrediting Commission a confidential and comprehensive report on the course reviewed.

Each applicant institution must study itself and submit a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The preparation of this report may take from two to four months in a small institution and three to nine months in a large, complex one.

During the self-evaluation, the institution’s study includes the gathering and analysis of pertinent data on all aspects of the institution. The thorough going-over an institution must give itself is reflected in the titles of the Self-Evaluation Report’s subdivisions: “instructional objectives,” “educational materials,” “educational services,” “student services,” “student success and satisfaction,”

“qualifications of faculty and staff,” “admission practices and enrollment agreements,” “advertising and promotional literature/control of field staff,” “financial responsibility,” “tuition policies, collection procedures and refunds,” “plant and equipment,” and “research and self-improvement.”

After the questions in all subdivisions are answered, the report should reveal the institution’s philosophy, organizational structure, specific practices and procedures, as well as success of its different operations and the degree to which it is accomplishing its stated objectives.

The self-evaluation process not only provides data on current operations, but also provides the opportunity for self-improvement. If required, a draft of the Self-Evaluation Report is completed and forwarded to DETC’s Accrediting Commission before the Readiness Visit.

4. Undergo a Readiness Visit

Any applicant institution may be required, at the discretion of the Executive Secretary, to undergo a “readiness” visit by a small committee. A report is produced to document the findings of the visit and forwarded to the institution for their analysis. If an institution is found to be “ready,” a visit by a full examining committee will be scheduled.

5. Submits SER and Plans for Visit

The institution submits its completed SER to the Commission, and it is reviewed for completeness. In addition to requiring submission of the Self-Evaluation Report and the review of the courses, an examining committee is assigned to visit the institution. A mutually convenient date is selected for the visit. The examining committee is not limited in size, but always includes a chair, an educational specialist, a business management specialist, subject specialists for each course area (who may or may not visit the institution), and an observer for the Commission.

Representatives from state licensing bodies and from federal agencies are notified of forthcoming visits and are also invited to participate as observers in the process.

The reports received from the Subject Specialists and any student surveys are sent to the institution and examiners prior to the on-site visit. A copy of the SER is sent to each on-site evaluator before the visit.

6. Institution Undergoes On-Site Visit

The on-site committee visits the institution and studies its entire operation in order to verify the information in the Self-Evaluation Report and to gather additional facts for the Accrediting Commission. Although designed as a fact-finding process,

the visit may also stimulate ideas for improvement of the applicant institution.

In those cases where resident training is provided as a required or an optional part of a distance education course, the training facilities are examined to make sure that resident training outcomes contribute to the total course objectives.

Following the visit of the examining committee, the committee members report their findings to the Chair. These individual reports are confidential, objective, and factual.

7. Chair Writes & Submits Report and Institution Responds

From the individual committee reports, the chair develops a report to describe the findings of the committee. The purpose of the Chair's Report is to present to the Accrediting Commission a thorough, succinct, and accurate statement of the findings of the Examining Committee. This report includes the applicant institution's areas of strength and weakness and its degree of compliance with the standards. It is confined to presentation of findings; no recommendation of action to the Accrediting Commission is included. A copy of the report is sent to the Executive Secretary of the Commission and to the institution's CEO. The institution is then given the opportunity to review the Chair's Report and respond to the factual

elements in it. This procedure provides the institution with the opportunity to respond to Committee findings as well as to report on any corrective actions taken subsequent to the on-site visit.

8. Commission Reviews and Takes Action

The Accrediting Commission meets at least twice each year to review the information assembled on applicant institutions. The Commission has four courses of action, which it may take on each application:

- accredit a new applicant institution or continue an institution's accredited status;
- accredit or continue accreditation with stipulations that must be met within a stated time period;
- defer a decision pending progress reports, additional evidence, or a statement of the institution's plan for improvement, any of which may require a follow-up visit;
- deny accreditation to an applicant or withdraw accreditation from an institution. If accreditation is withdrawn or denied, the Commission advises the institution and it may elect to appeal the action to a third party panel or have it reconsidered by the Commission itself.

After the final decision is made, the Commission notifies the institution. If the Commission votes to deny or withdraw accreditation, the institution is sent a statement of the reasons for denial and the institution may appeal or request reconsideration. Announcements of accreditation or re-accreditation are made in DETC publications. Letters are also sent to appropriate state and federal agencies. After the final decision is announced, the Commission purges its files and keeps only the reports and information necessary.

Periodic Reviews

An accredited institution must conform to all educational and business standards, must submit requested reports to the Accrediting Commission, and must be re-examined completely at least every five years. However, the Commission may call for periodic or special reports from any accredited institution and may call for a re-examination in fewer than five years if there is a change in ownership or management or if there is evidence of serious problems in the institution.

The DETC Accrediting Commission regularly meets in January and June of each year. A time schedule of actions is provided to each applicant institution. As a guideline, institutions desiring accreditation should allow 12 months for completing the application process.

Special Policies

The Accrediting Commission, in carrying out its work, has from time to time developed special policies to cover recurring situations or unique institutions. These policies supplement the formal Commission standards.

Examples of special policies include policies on: Bankruptcy of Institutions; Change of Mission, Objectives, or Marketing Approach; Change of Ownership; Change of Location; Course/Program Approval; Combination Distance Study-Resident Programs; Approval of New Combination Distance Study-Resident Programs; New Training Sites; Degree Programs; Non-U.S. Institutions; First Professional Degrees; Readiness Visit, and Electronically Delivered Learning. All of the policies may be found in the *DETC Accreditation Handbook*.

Acceptance of Distance Education Credits and Degrees

Many DETC member institutions offer academic degree programs. These degree programs are in many areas, such as engineering technology, business, health, law, and theology.

Acceptances of distance education degrees, or of distance study credits from college level courses, are largely determined by the policy

of the “receiving organization,” e.g., an employer, a college registrar, etc. DETC accreditation is *not* a guarantee that credit will be granted to any credit-seeking distance study graduate. Accreditation granted by any group does not mean “credit transferability.” Students seeking acceptance of their distance education work are best advised to learn what the specific policies of acceptance are at the receiving organization or institution.

Recognition

The Accrediting Commission’s recognition by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) are for postsecondary programs purposes only. Since the U.S. Secretary’s authority is statutorily limited to postsecondary institutions in the United States, this federal recognition encompasses only DETC accreditation in this area.

The Benefits of Accreditation

Throughout the past eight decades, accredited distance education institutions have been the leaders in the field of distance study. Some of the major benefits of accreditation:

- Reliance by counselors, employers, educators, governmental officials, and the public on the accredited status of an institution as a reliable index of quality;

- An expression of confidence in the policies and procedures of the institution by its peers—a lasting source of pride to the institution;
- An external source of stimulation to improve services, programs, and staff through periodic evaluations by an outside agency and by self-study;
- Assurance of high standards and educational quality through the adherence to established criteria, policies and standards;
- Recognition of status by certain states under legislation and regulation as well as recognition given by federal, state and local agencies in referring students to accredited institutions;
- Eligibility for the benefits and opportunities given to accredited institutions by federal law. **Only** accredited institutions may participate in the Montgomery G.I. Bill;
- The listing of the institution and its courses in the *Directory of Accredited Institutions*;
- The listing of the institution along with other higher education institutions in the Council for Higher Education Accreditation directory, *Accredited Institutions of Post-secondary Education*, distributed by the American Council on Education;
- The use of the DETC seal and reference to accreditation by the Accrediting Commission;
- Student qualification for tuition reimbursement under several industry and military plans requiring enrollment with accredited institutions. **Only** accredited institutions may participate in the DANTES' tuition assistance program for military personnel;
- Eligibility for participation in the academic credit evaluation procedure conducted by the American Council on Education; and
- Expedited acceptance of institution advertising by newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations and other advertising media.

Often-Asked Questions

Q. How long does the accreditation process take?

A. Generally, it can take about 12 months for the entire procedure. A smaller school may be able to prepare for accreditation in as few as 5 months. The Accrediting Commission meets in January and June, so prospective applicants are advised to initiate the process at least 12 months before the meeting they wish to have their application considered.

Q. From whom may one seek advice in preparing to undergo an accreditation review?

A. The Accrediting Commission staff in Washington is available for consultation by mail, phone, e-mail, or personal visit regarding any questions about the accrediting process, procedures, or standards.

Q. What other publications are useful to study as an institution prepares for an accreditation review?

A. Besides the *DETC Accreditation Handbook*, one may wish to read the *DETC Business Standards Course* that explains the business standards in detail. The *Course Development Handbook*, and the *Student Services Handbook* are also useful. The distance study course entitled, *DETC Evaluator Training Program* is also an excellent guide, and must be completed by someone at an applicant institution.

Q. As an applicant, may we mention the Accrediting Commission or our applicant status in our literature?

A. No. This would be inappropriate and has the potential to mislead the public about your institution's affiliation with DETC.

Q. Does the Commission offer additional assistance and counseling with the accreditation process?

A. Yes. The Accrediting Commission publishes the *DETC Evaluator Training Program* and frequently conducts seminars on how to prepare for an on-site visit, at which the staff of applicant institutions is strongly encouraged to attend. There are also sessions on accreditation at virtually every DETC Conference and/or Workshop.

Q. Must a distance study institution be located in the United States to qualify?

A. No. Distance study institutions outside of the U.S. may apply for accreditation. The Commission has a special policy for non-U.S. institutions. The DETC Accrediting Commission is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and is for U.S. institutions only. Since the U.S. Secretary's authority is statutorily limited to postsecondary institutions in the United States, this federal recognition encompasses only DETC accreditation in this area.

Q. If an institution offers a Doctoral-level degree program, may it apply for accreditation?

A. Not at this time. All of the institution's programs and degrees

must qualify to apply. The Commission's recognition by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) extends through the First Professional degree level only, e.g., the Doctor of Jurisprudence degree.

Q. Must the school be in operation two years before it may apply for accreditation?

A. The institution must have 24 months of continuous operation as a distance study institution before it may be accredited. However, if an institution's parent company is currently accredited by another recognized accrediting agency, then the institution must only have 12 months of continuous operation as a distance study institution before it may be accredited. Institutions may initiate an application near the end of its appropriate waiting period.

Q. Can an accredited school transfer its accreditation or the benefits of its accreditation to another institution or individual by sale, contract, franchise, or other arrangement?

A. No. Accreditation by the DETC Accrediting Commission is institutional and is extended only to the accredited institution and its approved programs. Accreditation cannot be transferred in any way to an entity

not under the ownership, management, and control of the accredited institution. All distance study programs and distance study-related activities under the ownership, management, and control of the accredited institution must be included in the accreditation, or none can be accredited. When an accredited institution undergoes a change in ownership, management, or control, the institution must undergo a complete accreditation review.

Q. How long is an application for accreditation valid?

A. An application for accreditation is valid for one year from the date it is received by the Commission.

Q. What are the costs involved for accreditation?

A. There are actually four types of fees:

1. on-site review fees
2. subject specialist review fees
3. annual accreditation fees
4. DETC annual dues

To estimate the on-site review fees and subject specialist review fees, consult the *DETC Accreditation Handbook* Appendix I.1. The DETC dues and accreditation fees are based on annual tuition receipts.

Q. Are accrediting reports and documents made public?

A. No. The process of accreditation is regarded as a confidential one, and accreditation reports and documents are treated in a confidential manner. The public is notified of final Accrediting Commission decisions, but chair reports, school responses, etc., are not released to the public.

Q. Must all courses, including kits, tools, textbooks, hardware, etc., be sent to the Accrediting Commission for review?

A. Yes. However, for applicants with an extremely large number of courses, subject specialist evaluators may be appointed to accompany the examining committee visiting the applicant institution.

Q. Will course material be returned to the institution after subject specialists review the material?

A. No. All course material, including kits, tools, textbooks, and hardware, is consumed in the course review process and is not returned to the applicant institution.

Q. Do outside observers serve on visiting Examining Committees?

A. The Commission routinely extends an invitation to the appropriate state licensing agency to have someone serve on the Examining Committee as an Observer. On occasion, federal officials are also invited to serve as observers. The institution

pays no examination fees for such observers. The Chair's Report and the Institution's Response to the Chair's Report are shared with the state observers who attended the on-site visit.

Q. Do "competitors" serve on visiting Examining Committees?

A. No. Evaluators known to have competing interests with the applicant institution are not appointed to serve on a committee. DETC accreditation is, however, a "peer review" process. Committees are made up of executive officers of other accredited institutions.

Q. Must the travel expenses for visiting Examining Committees be paid in addition to the on-site examination fees?

A. No. The on-site examination fee is a "flat fee" which includes the cost of travel for the Examining Committee members (except for non-U.S. institutions).

Q. How much does the accreditation visit cost?

A. The fees for an on-site review vary according to the size of the institution and the number of its courses and site locations. A school with one course seeking initial accreditation can expect the fee to range between \$6,000 and \$10,000.

Larger institutions with many courses can expect a higher fee.

Q. Will the credits I receive from a DETC-accredited institution be accepted by a traditional college or university?

A. Acceptance of degrees or credits from DETC-accredited institutions is largely determined by the policy of the “receiving organization,” e.g., an employer, a college registrar, etc. DETC accreditation is not a guarantee that credit will transfer to any college or university. You should always check with the colleges or universities that you wish to transfer your credits to before you enroll in a course. The American Council on Education reviews courses of DET

C-accredited institutions and makes credit recommendations that are published annually in “The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs” or call Oryx Press at 1-800-279-ORYX.

Q. Do you have a list of colleges or universities who will accept credits or degrees from DETC-accredited institutions?

A. No. There are more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States, and the decision to accept credits from DETC-accredited institutions is made by the registrar and/or dean at each college or university.

Publishing an accurate and up-to-date list would almost be impossible.

Q. Is distance learning as effective as learning in a classroom setting?

A. Numerous individual testimonials have been offered over the years attesting to the benefits of distance education. Beyond these claims, formal studies have been conducted to measure the effectiveness of the distance education method. All of the research published since 1920 has indicated that correspondence/distance study students perform just as well as, and in most cases better than, their classroom counterparts.

List of Accredited Institutions

A *Directory of Accredited Institutions* is published by the DETC Accrediting Commission and distributed to the public. Copies of the Directory are available by writing to:

Publications
DETC Accrediting Commission
1601 18th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009-2529

An Order Form is on page 19 of this booklet. Most of DETC publications are available at no charge in PDF format by visiting www.detc.org.

Over Four Decades of Excellence— Accrediting Commission Milestones

1955: First meeting of the Accrediting Commission, New York City.

1959: U.S. Commissioner of Education, Lawrence G. Derthick, signs letter giving official recognition to the Accrediting Commission as a “nationally recognized accrediting agency.” Dr. Derthick later joins the Commission as a public member.

1970: U.S. Commissioner of Education continues recognition of Commission as a “nationally recognized accrediting agency.”

1972: The composition of the Accrediting Commission changes to include a majority of members who represent the public. The Commission remains the sole U.S. accrediting agency to have such a composition.

1973: Accrediting Commission receives formal recognition as a member of the National Commission on Accrediting, the first time in history an agency accrediting proprietary schools had received NCA recognition.

1975: U.S. Commissioner of Education continues recognition of Accrediting Commission. Commission becomes a charter recognized member of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation, a successor organization of NCA. First non-private correspondence school, the U.S. Air Force Extension Course Institute, is accredited.

1979: First academic degree by correspondence study accredited, the Cleveland Institute of Electronics’ Associate degree in Specialized Electronics Technology.

1981: U.S. Commissioner of Education continues the recognition of the Commission and expands its recognized scope to include the accreditation of academic degrees at the associates level.

1983: The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation continues recognition of the Accrediting Commission and expands its recognized scope to include academic degrees from the associates through the masters degree levels.

1985: U.S. Secretary of Education continues the recognition of the Commission and expands its recognized scope to include academic degrees from the associates through the masters degree levels.

1993: Recognition of the Commission by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation is continued for full five year period. COPA disbands, and the Accrediting Commission becomes a charter recognized member of the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA).

1994: Name of Commission is changed to the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC).

1995: Recognition of the Commission continued by the Secretary of Education under the new regulations implementing the Higher Education Amendments of 1992.

1997: Commission becomes a member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

2001: Commission’s recognition by CHEA is continued.

2001: Commission’s recognition by Secretary of Education is continued and scope is expanded to include first professional degrees.

2002: Commission is expanded to eleven members.

2004: Commission size is reduce to nine members.

Order Form for DETC Publications

Quantity Requested	Publication	Price	Amount
_____	<i>DETC Accreditation Handbook</i> A handbook on accreditation. (Free with Evaluator Training Program)	\$30	_____
_____	<i>Directory of Accredited Institutions</i> Lists all accredited schools.	NC	_____
_____	<i>DETC Course Development Handbook (2004)</i> A step-by-step guide to writing courses.	\$50	_____
_____	<i>DETC Student Services Handbook</i> A step-by-step guide on developing student services.	\$25	_____
_____	<i>DETC Evaluator Training Program</i> A distance education course to train evaluators for DETC accreditation visits. \$195 DETC Members; \$295 Non-members (*Includes a copy of <i>DETC Accreditation Handbook</i>)	\$195* \$295*	_____ _____
_____	<i>DETC Business Standards Course</i> A distance learning course on the ethical standards of the DETC. (*\$10 for text only; \$70 for text and exams)	\$10* \$70*	_____ _____
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