



Council For Lifelong Learning

Distance Learning

Fact Sheet

September 2001

1. What is "Distance Learning"?	Distance learning is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction occurs when the student and instructor are not in the same place. Instructional delivery methods include: correspondence study, or audio, video, and computer technologies or a combination of instructional methods. The Internet is the fastest-growing distance learning delivery method.
2. Who offers distance learning instruction?	Various types of distance learning opportunities are available in the school districts and public postsecondary institutions in Florida.
3. Who is responsible for overseeing distance learning activities?	<p>The Department of Education (DOE) is statutorily charged with the following duties relating to the oversight of distance learning in the state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• facilitating a statewide coordinated system for cost-efficient advanced telecommunications services;• coordinating the use of existing resources to support a statewide advanced telecommunications services and distance learning network;• assisting in the coordination of the utilization of the production and uplink capabilities available through Florida's public television stations, eligible facilities, independent colleges and universities, private firms, and others as needed;• seeking the assistance and cooperation of Florida's cable television providers;• coordinating partnerships for development, acquisition, use, and distribution of distance learning;• securing and administering funding for programs and activities for distance learning; and• Managing the state's satellite transponder resources.
4. Through what mechanism does the DOE accomplish its duties?	The Florida Distance Learning Network Advisory Council was created to assist the DOE in carrying out its duties relating to distance learning. The advisory council consists of members from various entities who have an interest in distance learning, such as educational institutions, libraries, and the telecommunications industry.

<p>5. What is the Florida Community College Distance Learning Consortium?</p>	<p>The Florida Community College Distance Learning Consortium facilitates distance learning statewide by recommending policies, funding recommendations, licensing products and services, maintaining a website and electronic catalog of distance learning courses, representing the Florida Community College System on regional and national committees and facilitating the sharing of information and resources across the system.</p> <p>The Consortium is directed to address issues relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• access;• time needed for students to meet their educational goals;• coordination of the acquisition, development and distribution of courses;• development of a distance learning associate to baccalaureate degree program with state universities;• maintaining an inventory of distance learning courses, staff development materials and support services; and,• training efforts for faculty and staff and related services involved in distance learning.
<p>6. What is the Florida Virtual Campus?</p>	<p>The Florida Virtual Campus (FVC) is a collaborative effort between the Florida Community College System and the State University System designed to respond to student and policy maker demands for expanded distance learning opportunities. The mission of the FVC is to assist Florida's postsecondary institutions in providing affordable access to quality distance education and to help facilitate a seamless distance learning experience for students. The FVC avoids duplication by building on the many existing investments in comprehensive distance learning projects. Although the FVC does not have degree granting authority, it enables students to shop for courses at the public postsecondary institutions in the state. The FVC replaced the Distance Learning Institute, which was created in 1997, to provide for coordination between the Community College System and the State University System regarding distance learning. There is no cost to Florida public institutions to join the FVC.</p>
<p>7. What is the Florida Distance Learning Library Initiative?</p>	<p>The Florida Distance Learning Library Initiative is a statewide partnership between the state's public community colleges, universities, and libraries. The program provides access to a comprehensive array of resources, a reference center, library training, document delivery, and inter-library loan privileges at 38 public postsecondary institutions.</p>

<p>8. What is the Florida Virtual High School?</p>	<p>The Florida Virtual High School (FVHS) is a public on-line school providing curriculum and instructional services over the Internet at no charge to Florida students. (See Florida Virtual High School Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>9. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Chapter 241, F.S. -- Distance Learning Section 228.082, F.S. -- Florida Virtual High School</p> <p>Rule 6H-1.046, F.A.C. -- Florida Community College Distance Learning Consortium</p>
<p>10. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Office of the Commissioner of Education (850) 487-1785</p> <p>Florida Community College Distance Learning Consortium www.distancelearn.org (850) 645-4826</p> <p>Florida Distance Learning Network Advisory Council (850) 488-0980 www.doe.firn.edu/edtech</p> <p>Florida Virtual Campus (813) 974-7122 www.floridavirtualcampus.org</p> <p>The Florida Virtual High School 445 West Amelia Street Orlando, FL 32801 (407) 317-3326, Ext. 2742 http://fhs.net</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Committee on Colleges & Universities (850) 488-3711</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Committee on General Education (850) 414-9780</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Council for Lifelong Learning (850) 414-6694</p>