



**Continuing Education Coordinating Board for
Emergency Medical Services
511 Mills Run Road
Dallas, TX 75244**

TITLE OF POLICY: Distributed Learning

Policy Administrator:
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Introduction

CECBEMS recognizes that Distributed Learning (DL) is an instructional model that allows instructor, students, and content to be located in different, non-centralized locations so that instruction and learning occur independent of time and place. The distributed learning model can be used in combination with traditional classroom-based EMS continuing education, operate independently as a traditional distance learning course, or educators may choose to operate a virtual classroom through television, satellite, telephone, or Internet technology.

While a variety of distribution methods are available to the EMS educator, CECBEMS is particularly aware that the Internet-based World Wide Web (WWW) by its very nature is an efficient method to rapidly distribute educational resources and information. We expect that as technology improves, and access to high speed connections to the Internet increase, more and more EMS personnel will be in a position to benefit from education delivered on-line.

In order to support the growth in development, acceptance, and quality of EMS continuing education using distributed learning (DL) methods, the following policies are applicable to the CECBEMS review and accreditation process for eligible* organizations and individual courses that incorporate distributed learning methods.

*Eligible organizations are defined as an educational institution; a national, state, regional or local agency or association; a nonprofit corporation; a hospital; a for-profit corporation, any combination of the above, or other appropriate CE provider.

- CECBEMS will emphasize and promote organizational accreditation rather than course-by-course review of CE programs that use distributed learning methods.
- Organizational accreditation will be based on the applicant organization's self-assessments of their infrastructure and process for distributed learning course production, student support and quality management. The self-assessments will follow a schedule provided by CECBEMS and will require submission of sample curricula.
- Organization accreditation may include a site visit by a CECBEMS team qualified to assess compliance with distributed learning structure, process, and outcome requirements.
- Each type of distributed learning methodology involves the use of different structural and process methods that will be reviewed separately on self-assessment and during site visits. Therefore, organizations will be accredited to offer distributed learning continuing education in one or more of the following strategies: print, Internet, videotape, CD-ROM/DVD, satellite, and television.
- Unaccredited organizations will submit all courses for CECBEMS review prior to delivery. CECBEMS will provide forms for submission that will focus on the organizations infrastructure and process for distributed learning course production, student support and quality management. The entire course must also be presented for review prior to delivery. A key requirement for review will be the specification of the target audience level of training. The use of out of level content in courses must be clearly justified.

CECBEMS will provide a template/form for presentation of the curriculum for a course that requires applicants to identify each learning objective and the following supporting information:

- The prerequisites required to understand the material related to a specific objective.
- How learners can address and receive timely answers to questions regarding course content. Course sponsors must provide a mechanism for instructor (or instructor proxy) and learner to interact (synchronously or asynchronously) regardless of what type of distributed learning methodology is being used, for a period of no less than 30 days after the learning has taken place.
- The instructional content related to each learning objective.
- Learning strategies and learning activity the designer is using to facilitate meeting each learning objective.

- Assessment measures for each learning objective (i.e., Test questions for each learning objective should be presented.) Test questions that simply request learner recall of the content by means of a rote memory response shall be limited to no more than 50 % of all test questions.
 - References used to support instructional content used for each learning objective.
 - Description of the rationale for establishment of any specific cut-off score for passing the assessment tool.
 - The number of hours and/or minutes it takes for the average person to finish the lesson. This number must be based on actual test usage of the lesson or course.
- Accredited organizations do not submit courses for CECBEMS review prior to delivery. However, the learning objectives, instructional content, assessment tools and quality improvement strategy must be documented and made available in the format described above prior to the delivery of a course.
 - Failure by an accredited organization to submit this information may result in the suspension or revocation of the organization's certification. From time to time, CECBEMS will audit course offerings that carry approved continuing education hours and may require an individual course to be modified or discontinued based on that review.
 - If applicable, organizations must assure that the computer network and Internet access equipment needed to insure advertised accessibility are maintained and supported properly.
 - Organizations must assure that test results, scores and other evaluation materials that are electronically collected and or stored are adequately protected with appropriate backup and security from unauthorized access.