ACCET Document 3.SAL - Structured Asynchronous Learning (SAL) Template

Introduction

The Structured Asynchronous Learning (SAL) Template must be completed by institutions offering courses and/or programs via SAL technology and methodology. The template supplements and augments ACCET Document 3.1 – Analytic Self-Evaluation Report, which incorporates ACCET Document 2 – Standards for Accreditation. The template expands upon the ACCET Standards specifically referenced herein by adding *Specific Field Criteria* and *Supplemental Questions/Statements* to elicit a more relevant and valid self-evaluation of the institution and emphasize those standards where unique characteristics are identified.

SAL is instruction delivered through computerized electronic technologies. Designed specifically to support distinct learning objectives through a variety of instructional strategies, SAL requires active engagement and interaction by the student with instructional materials to meet course/program objectives and achieve intended learning outcomes. SAL is one method of instruction; it can be combined with other methods such as instructor-led training to reinforce learning.[1] SAL provides educational delivery that is conducted through an electronically facilitated environment to students who are separated by physical distance for all or part (hybrid) of the offering. However, SAL is not interactive distance learning, in that interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Student-to-student interaction is often limited as well. Additionally, SAL is typically self-paced instruction.

To ensure that SAL is appropriate in content and length, ACCET will review SAL programs and/or courses, including those offered in an online, asynchronous delivery mode, to verify that clock hour requirements are met and that the length of the programs and/or courses (in clock hours) is appropriate and educationally sound. In conducting its review, ACCET will consider various methods utilized by institutions to demonstrate that their SAL meets clock hour requirements and assigned clock hours are appropriate, including providing (1) a comparison of SAL with comparable training offered in a traditional face-to-face delivery mode and/or (2) a time-on-task analysis such as those completed by publishers for their online curriculum and made available to their end-users. Methods utilized by institutions to track and monitor student progress and attendance for online, asynchronous SAL frequently involve the verifiable tracking of student log-in time in conjunction with active student participation. For example, institutions record and track student participation in online activities and direct assessments (e.g., testing, assignments).

General Requirements

Institutions that have never offered SAL courses/programs (defined as any course or program with at least a portion offered via SAL) must seek prior approval from ACCET for an out-of-scope program, including situations involving the application of SAL methodology to already-approved

[1] Programs/courses that include units or courses delivered predominately or exclusively through SAL require approval as an SAL offering. Generally, no such approval is required for programs/courses that utilize SAL resources to supplement and enhance instructor-led classroom and/or laboratory instruction delivered in a traditional face-to-face or interactive distance learning mode.

courses/programs of study. To be eligible for approval of additional SAL courses/programs, an institution must first demonstrate the successful outcomes of graduates of its initial approved SAL course/program (e.g., above benchmark completion), based upon the submission of a comprehensive report.

ACCET will initiate a pilot project during which it will review and approve SAL programs/courses to be offered by its accredited institutions and selected initial applicants, with an assessment to be made subsequently as to whether to continue the approval of additional SAL courses/programs. During at least the initial pilot, ACCET will only approve avocational programs/courses delivered in whole or part (hybrid) through SAL that are offered by avocational institutions.

Standard I – Mission, Core Values, Ethics, and Planning

The institution has a mission, core values, and ethics that are compatible with the mission, scope, and standards of ACCET and has an effective planning process to enhance and improve the institution and its education, training, and services. The institution operates with integrity in all matters and in accordance with the "Principles of Ethics for ACCET Institutions" at all times.

A. Mission: The institution clearly states its mission and makes it public. The mission defines the purpose of the institution and provides a definitive basis upon which to deliver and assess its education and training programs. The institution establishes and utilizes specific criteria to measure whether it is achieving its mission. The education and training provided by the institution are consistent with its mission and are supported by documented evidence of continued need, including successful student outcomes, projected market demand, and positive market experience.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The reasons for offering the courses/programs via SAL are consistent with the institution's stated mission and serve a comparable but remote target population to be enrolled in courses/programs offered through SAL.

   Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

   - What is the rationale for the selection of the particular SAL methodology in use, and how does it serve the target population?

C. Planning: The institution utilizes a strategic planning process, consistent with its scope and size, to establish an institutional effectiveness plan that supports the institution's mission. The plan is updated at least annually, implemented to improve the institution, and reviewed at least bi-annually to assess progress in achieving the stated goal. The institution establishes a sound, written plan that identifies specific and measurable educational and business goals to be achieved in a one-year and/or multi-year (two to three years) time frame. For each goal, the plan includes operational strategies, projected time frames, required resources, and method(s) for subsequent evaluation that are utilized to measure progress in achieving the established goal.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Written plans are formulated and periodically updated which support the curricular, technological, and marketing objectives of the SAL courses/programs.

Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

- Does the institution maintain separate planning documents for SAL programs/courses? If yes, please provide. If not, provide references to the pertinent sections of the institution's current and long-term planning documents relative to its SAL programs/courses.

Standard II – Governance and Management

The institution is capably and responsibly managed.

A. Governance: The institution has a clearly identified and accountable governance structure, appropriate to the size of the institution and consistent with ACCET requirements, that delineates authority for the approval of institutional policies and responsibility for the overall direction and effectiveness of the institution. This management structure ensures the integrity and capability of the institution and its compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The institution maintains adequate written policies and procedures specifically designed to address the effective delivery of SAL courses/programs, whether discretely organized or incorporated as elements of other policies and procedures.

Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

- Provide a representative sample of policies and supporting procedures that guide the establishment, organization, funding, and management of SAL programs.

B. Institutional Management: The institution's management is responsible for developing and effectively implementing policies within an organizational framework that is clearly defined, understood, and effective. Written policies and procedures guide the day-to-day operations of the institution, ensure the effective operation of the institution, and are readily accessible to faculty and staff.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Operational management oversees the effective implementation of systems to guide the day-to-day operations of SAL courses/programs.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- Describe how the organizational structure supports the SAL programs. Provide an organizational chart for all SAL personnel.

- Describe how operational management facilitates relationships between instructional staff, technical support services, and student services.

D. Records: The institution has an organized record-keeping system that ensures all records are maintained in an accurate, orderly, and up-to-date manner. The record-keeping system facilitates ready access and review of these records by appropriate parties. All records are protected from unauthorized access and undue risk of loss. Employees and students have appropriate access to information contained in their files. Records are maintained for a period

of time consistent with applicable statutes, regulations, and sound business and educational practices.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Resources are available to provide appropriate access to electronic records (e.g., student/faculty computerized databases) for students, regulatory bodies, and ACCET. Backup copies are produced and maintained off-site on a scheduled basis. Electronic records are keyed and retrievable, both by student number and name. Records can be selected by start date or scheduled-to-graduate date cohorts and by program of study.

Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

- Briefly describe the student/faculty database(s). Describe the structure and organization of student and faculty databases and list the contents of both a typical student and a typical faculty record.

- What operational safeguards, including written procedures, exist to ensure the integrity of and access to electronic SAL student records in the event of equipment problems and/or school closure?

F. Professional Relationships: The institution establishes relationships, memberships, and affiliations with professional and other organizations within the education/training and employer/industry, and community network. These relationships are maintained, utilized, and documented for the purpose of enhancing the quality of the education, training, and student services.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Cooperative relationships with other SAL institutions, vendors, sponsoring organizations, and networks are maintained. Such relationships are used to develop institutional expertise in the design and delivery of quality courses that use effective SAL technologies.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- Describe the institution's professional relationships with other organizations. How are they used to enhance the quality of the educational design and methodology of the SAL programs/courses?

Standard III – Financial Capacity and Responsibility

The institution is fiscally sound and demonstrates ethical financial practices.

B. Financial Procedures: The institution assesses its finances at adequate intervals, at least quarterly. Written policies and procedures exist for proper financial controls and the supervision of financial management staff. Tuition charges are applied fairly and consistently. All financial transactions, including all charges and payments of tuition and other program costs are properly recorded and tracked on individual student ledgers. Cancellation and refund policies are written, fair, and equitable; are consistently administered; and comply with

statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Qualified and capable individuals manage and evaluate the effectiveness of the financial operations and practices.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The institution maintains effective oversight of the financial status of its SAL programs and implements procedures to timely determine the enrollment status of students relative to financial obligations and graduation processes.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- How are SAL programs included in the institution's overall budget?

- Demonstrate that the budget provides for appropriate updating of the technologies adopted for SAL programs.

- For SAL students, what are the policies and procedures for:
  - Determining the last date of attendance (LDA),
  - Monitoring student attendance, and
  - Identifying dropouts and making timely refunds.

Standard IV – Curriculum Design and Development

The institution's curriculum design and instructional materials are up-to-date, educationally sound, and appropriate for the expected outcomes of the program/courses.

A. Educational Goals and Objectives: The institution's programs and courses have appropriate and measurable educational goals and objectives. The curriculum content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential learning experience for students. The content and length of programs ensure that sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skill elements are included to meet the specific and measurable performance outcomes expected for the courses and programs. The institution must demonstrate that the length of the program is appropriate to provide a student with the requisite knowledge and skills of the courses and programs.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The curricular content and learning experiences are structured in a form appropriate for SAL commensurate with industry standards. Further, this structure is demonstrated to be well suited to the technology selected to deliver the training. SAL and the curriculum design support active learning and engage students, thereby contributing to the learning process and to student persistence.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- List the courses/programs that are offered in whole or in part via SAL.

- Describe how the institution determines the clock hour length for the SAL program or portion of the program.

- Describe how the institution ensures that the clock hour requirements are met for courses/programs offered in an online, asynchronous delivery mode.

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for course design and development. Describe the overall design and structure of the course/program, including the delivery modalities (online or blended), modes of communication, types of learning activities, and training schedule.

- Identify the clear, specific, and measurable objectives of the course/program, along with the expected learning outcomes. Demonstrate that the same course/program offerings in both SAL and classroom-based formats share the same curricular objectives and expected learning outcomes.

- Attach the course/program syllabus provided to students which contains a general overview of the course/program, including (1) the objectives and expected learning outcomes, (2) the assessment system, including the grading criteria, (3) the schedule of activities, and (4) navigational instructions.

- Describe how SAL and the curriculum design support active learning and engage students, thereby contributing to the learning process and to student persistence. What provisions are provided in the program design and course syllabi for frequent and active interaction between the student and instructional materials?

- How does the process ensure that the technology utilized in course delivery is appropriate for the course content? Demonstrate that the tools and media selected for the course/program align with the course/program objectives by effectively supporting the instructional materials and learning activities.

- What navigational devices and strategies are utilized to ensure that students navigate through the online component of the course/program in a logical, consistent, and efficient manner?

B. Program/Instructional Materials: Program materials, including syllabi, lesson plans, instructional guides, and texts demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence, and depth of each program or course in relation to the stated goals and objectives. Instructional materials, including supplementary textbooks, software, learning activities, visual aids, electronic links, and other teaching tools support the goals and objectives. All materials are relevant, up-to-date, readily available, and facilitate positive learning outcomes.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Program materials that clearly guide students through courses/programs have been adopted or adapted and are demonstrated to be effective and appropriate to the selected technology/methodology. The course materials provide a structure to connect students with faculty, mentors, or monitors at appropriate intervals, to facilitate learning and student progress.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- Describe how the design of course materials and syllabi contain clear directions and helpful guidelines that support the SAL students relative to the unique demands of the delivery/student feedback methodology in use.

- Demonstrate how course materials provide a structure that enables frequent and active interaction between learners and the instructional materials. Demonstrate how course materials provide a structure to connect students with faculty, mentors, or monitors, at appropriate intervals, to facilitate learning and student progress.

- Provide copies of the written policies and procedures for ensuring that program materials are delivered timely to participants.

- Describe the library and other electronic resources available to support the curriculum requirements of SAL students.

Standard V – Instructional Delivery and Resources

The institution utilizes appropriate and effective instructional methods and other resources to ensure sound instructional delivery, which may be provided through a variety of delivery modes, including traditional classroom/lab instruction, interactive distance learning, and blended instruction.

A. Instructional Methods: Instructional methods encourage active and motivated engagement by students. Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the curricula are followed and consistently applied by all instructional personnel. The instructional methodology is consistent with contemporary training industry standards and appropriate to the educational goals and curricular objectives, facilitates learning, and serves the individual learning needs and objectives of students. Instructional methods provide encouragement, challenges, and learning opportunities/activities for all enrolled students, taking into consideration different learning abilities and styles, prior levels of achievement, and different learning modalities such as visual, audio, and kinesthetic.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The methodology suits the delivery of the materials, the information being conveyed, and is consistent with the stated outcomes for SAL. Instructional methods are appropriate for courses/programs offered via SAL and encourage active participation from students. SAL facilitates learning by applying interactive strategies that engage students, stimulate learning, and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their acquired knowledge and skills. The importance of frequent, active, and appropriate interaction (synchronous or asynchronous) between students and instructional materials to demonstrate student learning is reflected in the design of the course/programs and in the technical facilities and services provided. All interactions work within the organization's web architecture and meet the organization's accessibility requirements. Any portions of the courses/programs that are contracted out must meet the requirements of ACCET Document 34 – Policy on Contracting for Educational Delivery.

   Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

   - Describe how the technology used to deliver the courses supports an effective and dynamic virtual classroom environment. How do course technology and navigation support student engagement and facilitate the student's learning experience?

- Describe the learning activities utilized to promote opportunities for student interaction with instructional materials that facilitate active learning. Provide a sample lesson, with a narrative describing how the lesson meets the requirements for appropriate interactivity, interface, and navigation.

- Describe any provisions for faculty-student interaction that are included in the program design and course syllabi. If applicable, describe any provisions for student-to-student interaction that are included in the program design and course syllabi.

- Provide copies of the written procedures used to ensure that the instructional methodology and technology are implemented consistently.

- Are students required to adhere to a structured timeline? If so, how is the timeline defined, e.g., daily objectives, weekly objectives, modular/term objectives? Describe techniques used to keep the class on the same timeline.

- Describe any portion of the curriculum delivery contracted out to a third party. Provide evidence of compliance with the requirements outlined in ACCET Document 34 – Policy on Contracting for Educational Delivery.

B. Equipment, Supplies, and Learning Resources: Equipment, supplies, and other learning resources support the goals and objectives of the programs offered by the institution. Adequate, appropriate, up-to-date, and functional equipment, supplies, learning resources, and furnishings are readily available for instructor and student use and for the effective delivery of the institution's education and training.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The institution provides a consistent and coherent technical framework for student and faculty use. Changes in technologies are systematically and effectively implemented to minimize the impact on students and faculty.

   Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

   - Does the institution utilize a software application (learning management system) for the delivery and/or management of the SAL course/program? If so, identify the learning management system (LMS) and describe how the LMS is used for the administration, documentation, tracking, and/or delivery of the SAL course/program. Attach the LMS agreement and identify the expiration date for the agreement.

   - What provisions have been made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability and privacy for students and faculty? Describe the software and hardware used to deliver the courses/programs offered through SAL. Is the equipment/software owned, leased, or rented? How is the equipment/software maintained? Provide a schedule for upgrading equipment and software.

   - Describe the equipment and/or software students will need to access the courses/programs. Is any equipment or software provided by the institution? How are students informed of technical requirements?

- Describe how students are oriented and trained in the use of the technologies required for successful course participation.

- Describe how technical support is reasonably available to students during hours when it is likely to be needed. How do students access this support? How is the effectiveness of this support measured, and what have been the results of such evaluations in the last 12 months?

- When a student progresses or transfers from one course or program to another, is it necessary to learn another software program or set of technical procedures? If so, how is this facilitated?

- Describe the processes in place to orient students to new software or systems when they are adopted.

Standard VI – Qualifications and Supervision of Instructional Personnel

The institution ensures that qualified instructors, under professional and capable direction, effectively deliver educational and training services.

B. Supervision of Instruction: Individuals with relevant education and experience in instructional delivery and management supervise instructional personnel. Supervisors of instructional personnel demonstrate effective evaluation and direction of such personnel. At least annually, qualified supervisors conduct and document an in-class observation, and review with the instructor that classroom observation, to include any administrative responsibilities as applicable to the institution and any collected student feedback.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Individuals with relevant education and experience in SAL are utilized effectively in planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring the courses/programs.

   Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

   - Describe the education and experience of each instructional supervisor and course designer relative to SAL expertise and provide a resume and/or ACCET Document 6 for each.

   - Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for the observation of any SAL classes. Describe how the results of the observations are used to improve the performance of instructors.

C. Instructor Orientation and Training: The institution develops and implements written policy for the effective orientation and training of instructional personnel to ensure consistent and effective instruction. Regular and relevant internal training and/or external professional development of instructional personnel are conducted and documented.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Instructors, course designers, monitors, and mentors who teach and/or facilitate SAL courses are appropriately oriented and trained in the effective use of the

technology and methodology to ensure a high level of instructional quality and effective communications with students.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure for the orientation and training of instructors, course designers, monitors, and/or mentors to facilitate the SAL course/program.

- What provisions ensure that adequate attention is given to instructional methods that are either unique to SAL or desirable for effective instruction in the SAL environment?

- Provide a copy of the institution's written policy and procedure relative to continuing professional development opportunities for instructors, course designers, monitors, and/or mentors to enhance skills in SAL methodology. How is the effectiveness of this professional growth and development assessed? Provide documentation demonstrating the completion of professional development by SAL faculty and staff over the past 12 months.

Standard VII – Admissions and Student Services

The institution recruits and enrolls only qualified students who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the education and training services and provides student services appropriate to their needs.

A. Recruitment: All advertising, promotional materials, and representations made by or on behalf of the institution for recruiting purposes, including web content, catalog, and social media postings, make only justifiable and provable claims regarding the courses, programs, costs, location(s), instructional personnel, student services, outcomes, and other benefits. All communications with prospective students are ethical, honest, and consistent with ACCET policies. The institution does not state or imply that employment, occupational advancement, and/or certification and licensing are guaranteed.

   Specific Field Criteria for SAL: All advertising, promotional materials, and other representations by or on behalf of the institution clearly indicate which courses/programs are offered in whole or in part in an SAL format. These materials and representations include reference to any requirements unique to students participating in courses/programs taught via SAL.

   Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

   - Demonstrate that prospective students receive all necessary information to make an informed choice prior to application, including, but not limited to, the following disclosures:
     - the level of technical competence required for successful participation;
     - estimated timeline for program completion;
     - library and other learning services either required or available to support SAL students, and the skills necessary to access them;

- arrangements for interaction with the faculty and fellow students, if a required component of the course/program; and
- information to assist prospective students in understanding independent learning expectations.

- For programs that require both resident and SAL participation, how are students properly informed prior to enrolling?

B. Admissions/Enrollment: The institution's written policies for admissions and enrollment are clearly stated, defined, and in compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Reliable and regular means are utilized to ensure that, prior to acceptance, all applicants are able to benefit from the education and training services, consistent with ACCET policies. The enrollment process, including any online process, is preplanned, effective, and regularly monitored by the institution to ensure its integrity.

The written enrollment agreement, contract, and/or application, as applicable, is furnished to appropriate parties before any payment or obligation is made and clearly identifies the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties. This document includes, at a minimum, (1) all costs stated in clear and explicit language, and (2) cancellation and refund policies that comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Admissions policies, procedures, and practices, including enrollment agreements and catalogs, fully and clearly represent the conditions and requirements related to SAL.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- What criteria are used to determine the student's eligibility for admission to the SAL courses/programs? Where are they published?

- Provide a copy of the cancellation and refund policy/procedures specific to SAL students, as stated in the enrollment agreement and/or application documents.

- How does the institution address the issue of electronic signatures and electronic enrollment agreements?

- Describe how the institution provides SAL students with the following:
  - admissions counseling;
  - application/registration processing;
  - any entrance examinations; and
  - financial counseling, including access to secure payment arrangements.

- Describe what methods the institution has established to:
  - verify the identity of students to ensure that the student who registers for a course/program delivered by SAL is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program;
  - protect the privacy of students enrolled in SAL training; and

- notify students, prior to enrollment in SAL training, of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity.

D. Student Services: Student services are provided consistent with the mission and programmatic learning objectives of the institution and include such services as student orientation, academic and non-academic advising, tutoring, job placement assistance, extracurricular activities, and housing, as applicable.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Appropriate services are accessible to students of SAL programs, on and/or off the institution's physical campus.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- List and describe how the institution provides services to SAL students, including the following:
  - academic advising;
  - tutoring;
  - bookstore services; and
  - complaint procedures (including implementation of the requirements of ACCET Document 49.1).

- What challenges have been identified unique to the institution's SAL students? How does the institution identify students at risk, and what steps are taken to counsel/advise them to maximize retention?

Standard VIII – Student Assessment and Achievement

The institution utilizes appropriate and educationally sound methods to assess student performance, attendance, and achievement.

B. Attendance: Performance measurements are written, periodically evaluated, and updated to ensure instructional effectiveness. The institution has an educationally sound, written assessment system that appropriately relates to the performance objectives of the program or course and includes at a minimum, the grading scale, grading criteria and weighting, and means of assessment such as tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and participation. The institution clearly and effectively communicates the assessment system to students at orientation and/or the beginning of the course/program.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Policies have been established for expected levels of student participation in SAL courses/programs. These attendance policies identify the minimum standards for student progress and for completion/graduation, along with the consequences of failing to meet these standards, including the maximum period of student inactivity at which point a student will automatically be considered withdrawn. All students and faculty are aware of these policies, which are consistently and accurately administered, monitored, and documented. Students are informed, on a regular and timely basis, of their progress in meeting the standards of attendance.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- How is attendance defined (e.g., how does the institution account for the students' time on task compared to the clock hours comprising the courses/programs) and monitored for SAL students? How and where are attendance records maintained?

- Can students complete assignments at their own pace? If so, describe how student participation is monitored.

- Describe how attendance (student participation) will be measured, particularly for asynchronous online instruction, and how frequently attendance will be assessed. Attach the attendance policy for SAL courses/programs that clearly identifies (1) the frequency with which student attendance will be assessed, (2) the minimum attendance standards, including the minimum attendance rate required to graduate from the course/program, and (3) the consequences for students failing to meet these standards, including the maximum period of student inactivity at which point a student will automatically be considered withdrawn.

- Describe how the institution ensures that attendance policies are consistently and accurately administered, monitored, and documented.

- Describe how students are informed, on a regular and timely basis, of their progress in meeting the standards of attendance.

C. Student Progress: The institution effectively monitors, assesses, and records the progress of students utilizing an educationally sound and clearly defined assessment system established by the institution. Semester credits, quarter credits, clock hours, and/or continuing education units are used to denote the successful completion of the education and training services. Student progress is documented consistently in accordance with institutionally established performance outcomes and is communicated to all students. Students are informed of their progress on a regular and timely basis. The institution publishes a clear description of its requirements for satisfactory student progress, as well as the consequences for failure to meet these requirements, and utilizes sound written policies and procedures to determine student compliance with these requirements and to document the results.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Policies, procedures, and practices are documented and consistently implemented in order to reliably measure student progress within the context of the SAL format. When examinations are employed (paper examinations, online examinations, writing assignments, demonstrations of competency, etc.), they take place within circumstances that include verified student identity. The institution otherwise seeks to assure the integrity of student work.

Supplemental Questions/Statements for SAL:

- How and when are students provided with information about their assignments, progress, and grades, including specific feedback on assignment results? How is this information secure? How are student assignments submitted?

- Describe how the institution ensures the authenticity of the student's work, including what measures/safeguards are in place to ensure that the enrolled student is the individual completing assignments, tests, and evaluations. Included must be evidence that the institution verifies the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as (a) a secure login and pass code; (b) proctored examinations; and (c) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity.

- How is instructor response time to student assignments/tests/evaluations measured and evaluated, and relative to what standards?

- Describe the process for administering student examinations. Provide copies of the written policies and procedures in place to assure the identity of the student and the integrity of student work.

- Describe how student satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is tracked, including how the institution identifies and counsels SAL students who fall behind in their work and/or are struggling academically. Attach written SAP policies and procedures which clearly identify (1) the minimum standards for student progress and for completion/graduation, (2) the consequences for students failing to meet these standards, including termination; (3) the tracking of student participation and student satisfactory progress; and (4) student counseling to address academic deficiencies.

- Are students expected to progress through the course/program together in student cohorts (groups)? Does the institution monitor and track students in accordance with these student cohorts?

- If the SAL course/program is delivered on demand, describe how the timeline for successful completion is defined. Describe how the institution monitors and tracks students to ensure student achievement and successful completion of the course/program.

- Describe the institution's retention strategies and attach written policies and procedures to support these retention strategies to ensure students' academic achievement and successful completion of the SAL programs/courses. Additionally, provide documented evidence to demonstrate the effective implementation of these policies and procedures.

Standard IX – <u>Institutional Effectiveness</u>

The institution utilizes appropriate methods of evaluation to assess institutional effectiveness and to ensure that student outcomes are consistent with the institution's mission and the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

A. <u>Student Satisfaction</u>: The institution establishes and implements written policies and procedures that provide an effective means to regularly solicit, assess, document, and validate student satisfaction relative to the quality of education, training, and student services provided. The institution maintains open lines of communication with students and demonstrates responsiveness to student issues. As appropriate to the length of the program or course, the institution conducts interim student evaluations and a final evaluation upon

completion of the term of enrollment measuring the totality of the student experience. Student feedback is utilized to improve the education, training, and student services provided by the institution.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: The institution's processes for measuring and analyzing participant satisfaction should yield useful data specific to the SAL technology/methodology and the student experience interacting with instructors and other students within the virtual classroom environment.

Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

- Describe procedures for obtaining feedback from SAL students. How is this feedback used to evaluate course content and to assess and improve the effectiveness of course design, materials, and technology/methodology utilized in the SAL environment?

D. Completion and Job Placement: Written policies and procedures are followed that provide effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate the quality of the education and training services provided relative to completion and placement rates, as applicable.

- Completion: The number of participants who complete the programs and courses in which they enroll is consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

- Job Placement: Institutions offering vocational programs provide job placement assistance to graduates and document the results to enhance the effectiveness of the training services provided. The quality of such programs is validated by positive training-related outcomes consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

Specific Field Criteria for SAL: Completion rates for SAL courses/programs are monitored apart from the institution's non-SAL courses/programs to ensure outcomes consistent with ACCET-mandated benchmarks.

Supplemental Question/Statement for SAL:

- How does the institution define a completer of its SAL courses or programs to calculate completion rates? What are the completion rates for students in each SAL course/program?

- Identify the maximum period in which a student may successfully complete the course/program.