



Distance Education

The following information was excerpted from EducationUSA's website for Distance Learning (www.EducationUSA.info). For more information, please contact your EducationUSA Advisor at YaoundeEDU@state.gov.

- Distance education is a type of formal learning in which the student and the instructor are not in the same place at the same time. Instruction may be given at a particular time and specific location, or instruction may be received by students wherever and whenever they desire, as long as they have access to the Internet or, in the case of correspondence education, to the mail.
- Courses are completed through: mail and post offices; telephones and voicemail; one-way or interactive radio, television, satellite, audio, or video transmission; video cassette recorders (VCRs) or CD-ROMs; electronic mail (e-mail) and the Internet (e.g., Web-based learning).
- Students have different motivations for taking part in a distance education program. Benefits of enrolling in distance education programs include being able to take courses from home and with fewer disruptions to daily life, and being able to enhance future professional possibilities without having to leave your current job. To be successful all distance learners need privacy, an enjoyment of working independently, and the ability to work consistently.
- There is a wide range of distance education programs available through traditional and virtual U.S. colleges and universities, professional organizations, and private companies. Things to consider when researching a program or institution include:
 - What are the specific educational outcomes of the program? Do you want to earn a degree or do you want to take just a few classes to learn a new skill or to complete a certificate program to increase your professional status?
 - What are the total costs of the program? Do the fees include books and shipping, if necessary? Are there any additional expenses you might incur? Costs for distance education vary considerably depending on the type of program chosen.
 - Will the time difference between Cameroon and the campus in the United States prevent you from taking part? Are students required to attend classes occasionally on a U.S. campus?
 - Do you have the technical skills and equipment necessary to complete the assignments, as well as have access to technical support when they need it?
 - Will the information be delivered to you in a timely enough fashion (for example, if it is delivered by mail) for you to complete the course?
 - The security and integrity of any distance education program are of great concern to potential employers and home country government. Therefore, before enrolling, students should find out how the program ensures that students complete assignments and examinations themselves. The student may have to find a local institution to administer any required tests.
 - The quality and value of the program should be examined in terms of the program's curriculum; employment of recent graduates; and recognition of the degree, certificate, or diploma in Cameroon. Students attending institutions that are not accredited by a recognized body will find it difficult to have their degrees recognized by U.S. and home country government agencies, other educational institutions, and many private employers.
- Virtual universities offer no campus-based programs at all; every program they run is a distance education program. The number of virtual universities is increasing, and most hold the same kind of accreditation as traditional, campus-based institutions. Be sure to check that your program is accredited before applying.

The recognized accrediting body for distance learning-only programs in the United States is the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). Please visit DETC's website to check that the programs to which you plan to apply are accredited.

- Admission requirements. While some programs have no requirements for admission, most have similar application procedures for enrollment into a distance education program as on-site programs. If the institution offering the distance education program also offers campus-based programs, the requirements for applying will likely be the same for both. In addition, many programs, before they accept applicants, require them to complete surveys and exercises in computer literacy.

Useful Websites:

Distance Education and Training Council

<http://www.detc.org/>

Adult Ed. & Distance Learner's Resource Center

<http://www.geteducated.com>

Distance Education Clearinghouse

<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/index.cfm>

United States Distance Learning Association

<http://www.usdla.org>

University of Idaho – Distance Learning at a Glance

<http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/eo/distglan>

World Wide Web Virtual Library: Distance Education

<http://www.cisnet.com/~cattales/Deducation.html>

Resource Materials available in EAC Library Section:

[MBA Distance Learning Programs](#), Peterson's
[Internet University](#), Mills

[Bears' Guide to Earning Degrees by Distance Learning](#)

Free University Courses Online:

Open Course Ware Consortium, MIT, Yale

www.ocwconsortium.org

OCW Finder

www.ocwfinder.com

How to Split an Atom

www.howtosplitanatom.com/news/7-universities-offering-free-courses-online/

Universities and Colleges

www.universitiesandcolleges.org/free-online-college-courses/

YouTube

www.chronicle.com/wiredcampus/article/3615/new-from-youtube-free-downloads-of-college-lectures

Johns Hopkins University Public Health

<http://ocw.jhsph.edu/?select=www>