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# Intro:

## Distance learning

isn't for everyone. People who are most successful with it tend to be self-motivated, skilled with scheduling their time, and capable of meeting deadlines. Advanced reading and writing skills are often required to excel in text-heavy distance education courses.

## On the positive side,

distance education offers flexibility for people who have work or family responsibilities outside of school. Often, students enrolled in online education programs are able to work at their own pace, accelerating their studies if desired. Distance education also helps meet the needs of people who live in rural or remote areas. However, students involved in distance education often complain that they miss the direct, face-to-face interaction found on traditional campuses. Since coursework is generally self-directed, it is difficult for some distance education students to stay engaged and complete their assignments on time.



## This guide is intended to help

With all that in mind, this guide is intended to help a potential distance learner in the NFATTC region (Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington and the Pacific Jurisdictions) answer the following questions:

- > **OVERVIEW:** Does distance learning work? What types of distance learning opportunities are available? What are the pros and cons and typical requirements of each type? What kinds of technology or equipment do I need?
- > **TIPS FOR SUCCESS:** How do I know if distance learning is a good fit for me? How can I set myself up to succeed with distance learning? What should I look for in selecting a distance learning course or program?
- > **CURRENT COURSES:** What addition education distance learning courses are currently available?
- > **RESOURCES:** What other resources should I know about?

# Overview:

## 1. Does distance learning work?

Most of the primary studies done on this question (many of which were conducted when distance education became more prominent in the late 80's – 90's) conclude that distance education compares favorably with classroom-based instruction. In fact, Fox (1998) stated he found no actual evidence from a single study, from distance education teaching experiences, or from students has provided proof that distance learning is less effective than classroom-based instruction.

With few exceptions, students using technology in distance education have similar learning outcomes to students in the traditional classroom setting (Beare 1989; McCleary & Egan 1989; Sonner 1999). Souder (1993) conducted a natural experiment that compared traditional students and distance education students in management of technology master's degree programs. Distance learners can perform as well as or better than traditional learners as measured by homework assignments, exams, and term papers. Equally important, as noted by researchers, is the fact that students in distance learning courses earned higher grades than those in the traditional classroom setting (Bartlett 1997; Bothun 1998; Heines & Hulse 1996; Kabat & Friedel 1990; Schutte 1996; Souder 1993). Gubernick and Ebeling (1997) stated that distance education students scored from five to ten percent higher on standardized achievement tests than did students in the traditional classroom setting. Conversely, as reported by other researchers, there are no significant differences in grades for distance education students versus traditional students (Freeman 1995; Mortensen 1995; McKissack 1997).



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## 2. What types of distance learning opportunities are available?



To start with the “big picture”, below is a quick overview of this rapidly developing and changing field. The grid below analyzes the most common options currently available. Section VI provides links to actual courses that are currently being offered in NFATTC’s region.

### 3. What are the pros and cons and typical requirements of each type?

TYPE	REQUIREMENTS	PROS	CONS	EXAMPLE
<p><b>ONLINE* COLLEGE COURSES:</b> becoming very common as a supplement to inperson coursework; entire degrees may be offered online</p>	<p>Internet access (dial-up is not workable due to how slow it is)</p> <p>Computer</p> <p>Phone</p> <p>Tuition</p> <p>Self motivation and discipline</p> <p>Ability to read at college level</p> <p>Moderate degree of computer literacy (depends on the course and the institution offering it)</p> <p>Ability to meet at scheduled times for synchronous* courses</p>	<p>Accredited</p> <p>Generally many supportive resources for the learner: library, student advising, technical assistance</p> <p>Credits generally transfer well</p> <p>Well-established entities that are not going to disappear or close up shop</p> <p>Professional commitment to the field and students</p>	<p>Can be expensive</p> <p>May require college registration</p> <p>Courses may not be offered as frequently as needed</p>	<p>Community or 4-year courses towards a degree or certification in addictions counseling</p>

TYPE	REQUIREMENTS	PROS	CONS	EXAMPLE
<p><b>ONLINE* COURSES OFFERED BY PRIVATE COMPANIES:</b> typically not part of a comprehensive curriculum towards a degree, such as colleges offer;</p>	(Same as above)	<p>Topics covered may be responsive to newer trends and issues in treatment</p> <p>Some leaders in the field go on to offer classes so can be a way to connect with a higher level of expertise in some cases</p>	<p>May not be accredited</p> <p>More difficult to determine quality of class</p> <p>Can be expensive</p> <p>Instructor may focus on their own techniques rather than evidence-based ones</p> <p>Less secure as a resource (some go out of business)</p> <p>Usually few or no additional resources and technical support</p> <p>Puts more onus on buyer to research the company</p>	<p>Current or former counselor who sets up a company and provides addiction counselor training courses</p>
<p><b>ONLINE* COURSES OFFERED BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES (federal, state, local):</b> typically single offerings on a particular topic</p>	(Same as above)	<p>Courses tend to be accurate, reputable, solid</p>	<p>May be difficult to find--many government entities lack budget and technical expertise to offer online courses</p>	<p>ATTC courses; courses offered by State Addictions Div.</p>
<p>* There are two types of online courses: synchronous and asynchronous. Students taking online education courses synchronously are required to log on to their courses at the same time as their professors and peers. Students taking online education courses asynchronously may log on to the course website whenever they choose and do not have to participate in discussions or lectures at the same time as their peers.</p>				
<p><b>“HYBRID” COURSES:</b> some sessions online* and some in person at a facility</p>	<p>(Same as above), plus means of transportation and schedule that allows for time to attend inperson sessions</p>	<p>Online sessions are convenient and inperson sessions offer opportunities to bond with and discuss topics with instructor and fellow students</p> <p>Student must be able to travel to the classroom for the designated session(s)</p>	<p>Depending on location of inperson meetings, transportation may be an issue</p>	<p>Mainly offered by 2- and 4- year colleges</p>

TYPE	REQUIREMENTS	PROS	CONS	EXAMPLE
<p><b>VIDEO COURSES:</b> broadcasts typically sponsored by colleges</p> <p>Some cable stations may also broadcast courses developed by individuals</p>	<p>Self motivation and discipline</p> <p>TV set or computer with high speed internet access</p>	<p>May be easier to understand for participants with lower reading level capabilities</p>	<p>Participant needs to research the provider; cable-based shows can be of questionable reputation</p> <p>Depending on the type of broadcast, may be one-way communication so questions difficult to get answered</p>	<p>Mainly offered by 2- and 4- year colleges</p>
<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE COURSES:</b> now much less common due to availability of internet-based courses; typically use written assignments or workbook submitted for grading/ feedback</p>	<p>Self motivation and discipline</p> <p>Ability to send and receive packages by mail</p>	<p>Requires little or no technology/tech savvy</p> <p>Participant must be able to read at level of materials provided</p> <p>Easy to review material</p>	<p>Difficult to find now that internet-based courses are available</p>	<p>Alaska's RADACT training program</p>
<p><b>PUBLICATION-BASED:</b> offering CEUs for reading and submitting written responses to quiz questions</p>	<p>Subscription (in some cases)</p> <p>Ability to read at the level of the publication</p>	<p>Requires little or no technology (unless an e-publication which requires internet and computer)</p> <p>Relatively easy and convenient</p> <p>Topics can be very timely and responsive to current needs and trends</p>	<p>One-way communication so questions may not be easily answered</p> <p>Very limited no. of CEUs are available this way</p> <p>Offers least possibility for two-way communication so not appropriate for skills-based training but acceptable for increasing knowledge of some topics</p>	<p>Addiction Messenger offers CEUs for responding to articles</p>
<p><b>WEBINARS:</b> typically single event topical sessions</p>	<p>Computer with internet access</p> <p>Phone</p> <p>Email</p>	<p>Convenient</p> <p>Can be responsive to immediate needs and provide "hot" topic type training</p>	<p>Can be set up and sponsored by almost anyone, so participant must research the provider</p> <p>May or may not offer CEUs</p>	<p>Sessions noted in state agencies' training calendars</p>

### 3. What kind of technology or equipment will I need?



Distance education providers will list the specific technology needed to participate in their courses, so you should start with the provider's website and if you don't find the requirements specified there, give them a call. In general, you will need:

- High speed internet access—if you are on a slow or dated system, such as dial-up, you probably won't be able to navigate distance ed. courses quickly enough to make it work for you.
- A computer with sufficient memory and capacity to handle large and complex files, do downloads, handle videos, etc.

Below is a sample set of requirements taken from one college's website—they are provided here to illustrate the kind of information you should obtain from the distance ed. organization so you can be sure you have what it takes, technologically speaking, to participate:

#### ► SAMPLE: Computer System Requirements

1. Operating Systems: Windows XP; Windows Vista; Macintosh OSX
2. Processor and RAM: Minimum 1 Ghz processor; Minimum 1 GB RAM; Windows Vista requires a minimum of 2 GB of RAM to run effectively
3. Internet Access: High-speed Internet access is required: DSL, cable, or high-speed wireless; a 56K dial-up connection is insufficient for accessing online courses
4. Recommended Browsers:  
Windows: Internet Explorer 7; Firefox 2.0 or 3.5; Safari 4.0  
Macintosh: Safari 4.0; Firefox 3.5
5. Miscellaneous: Current Java Runtime Environment





## Tips for Success:

### 5. How do I know if distance learning is a good fit for me?

Taking classes or even earning a degree online can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. But, distance education is not for everyone. Depending on your career goals, distance education opportunities may be challenging to find. While some people thrive on the independence and freedom offered through such classes, others do not fare as well.



### Characteristics of successful distance learners

Successful distance learners have a few characteristics in common.



Compare yourself to the following list to determine whether or not online classes are a good fit for your personality and habits.

1

### SELF MOTIVATED

Successful distance learners do just as well, if not better, without people looking over their shoulders. While some people need teachers to keep them motivated and on-task, distance learners are **able to motivate themselves**. They realize that they will never be face-to-face with the people who give them assignments and grade their work, but they don't need others to encourage them. The most successful students are self-motivated and set their own goals.

2

### PACE THEMSELVES

Successful distance learners are **not procrastinators**. These students enjoy the freedom of working at their own pace and appreciate the ability to complete their work in as much time as it takes them, instead of waiting for an entire class. However, they understand that putting off their work too often can end up adding months, if not years, to their studies.

3

### LOVE TO READ

Successful distance learners have good reading comprehension skills. While most people learn by listening to lectures and taking notes, the majority of distance learners are expected to **master material through reading alone**. Although some distance learning courses offer video recordings and audio clips, most programs require that students understand a large amount of information that is only available through written text. These students are able to comprehend texts at the college level without the direct guidance of a teacher.

4

### ABILITY TO FOCUS

Successful distance learners **can resist constant distractions**. Successful students letting the machine pick up the phone when they know there is work to be done.

5

### OTHER SOCIAL OUTLETS

Successful distance learners feel alright about missing the social elements of traditional schools. Whether they're mature adult learners or younger students who get their socialization from extracurricular activities elsewhere, **they are comfortable with their current social situation**. In place of classroom discussion, they explore the issues with their peers through email and message boards or discuss what they're learning with spouses or coworkers.

# 6. How can I set myself up to succeed?



## Time Management

Time management may be the biggest factor in succeeding with distance learning. Successful distance learners have to be proactive in their studies and take responsibility for their own learning.

To master time management, first determine what time of day you think you will be most focused on your studies. Are you a morning person or a night owl? Do you concentrate best after a cup of coffee or after lunch? Once you narrow in on a time of day reserve a designated allotment of time to dedicate to your course. Stay committed to that reserved time and treat it like an appointment that can't be budged.

## Balancing Personal Obligations

While there are many reasons to take an online course – one of the most frequent reasons students choose these courses is because of the convenience. Whether you have a full-time job, don't want to fight traffic or are raising a family – balancing school and personal obligations can become a juggling act.

The beauty of self-paced, online courses (otherwise known as “asynchronous” courses) is that you can study around your schedule. Other online courses may require that you log in at the same time as the professor and/or other classmates (these are called “synchronous” courses), so those courses may require a bit more adjustment on your part so you can participate at the designated time.

Studies of people who have done well with distance learning reveal the following tips for success: .....

## Study Environment

An ideal study environment can vary from student to student. Some students need absolute silence while others can't seem to concentrate without noise in the background. No matter what your preference is, a well-lit place that is free from distractions is recommended. Note that you'll make much better use of thirty minutes of disruption-free study than an hour's worth of commotion-filled learning. If you can't escape in-home interruptions, try the library or a coffee shop. Schedule your designated study time when you can be in a distraction-free environment and your chances for success will increase; below are a few sample "work rules" to consider—make a list that works for you and share it with those you live with:



- > "Work time is between the hours of 7 and 11 a.m. I won't plan anything else during that time."
- > "The ringer on the phone or cell phone is always turned off while I'm working."
- > "When I put a sign on the door, family members and friends should know that I'm working and not disturb me."
- > "I will take one big break in the middle of my work, but will stop taking lots of small breaks throughout the morning."



## Questions

As an online student there are several ways to get the answers you are seeking. If your course offers instructor support (recommended), you can always direct inquiries to your teacher. Top-notch courses tend to provide first-class support so that students never feel lost or alone during the e-learning process.

However, online chat rooms, if provided, are another great resource for students seeking answers. Online chat rooms give students a forum to meet other students taking the same course and ask questions or discuss assignments. More than likely another student taking the course has had or will have the same question.

## Get What You Give

Remember that distance learning courses are designed to provide the skills necessary to acquire professional caliber positions for in-demand occupations. The more effort you put forth in these online courses to comprehend the lessons taught the more likely you are to succeed after the course is finished. Extra effort during the course will lead to an easier transition in your new positions or with your new responsibilities. Overall, e-learning has a lot to offer students who dedicate the time and focus to extracting everything the course has to offer.



## Staying Motivated

Many distance learners agree that the most difficult part of studying online is staying motivated. Because students must take the initiative to complete their courses completely on their own, without the physical presence of teachers and other peers, many students find it easy to become distracted and discouraged in their work. Don't let this happen to you – use these four motivational tips to stay on task:

### > Connect

Connect with your classmates. Making an effort to actually get to know your classmates can be rewarding. If you find students from your area, consider a physical study group at an appropriate meeting place. If not, try to create an online support group of peers. They'll appreciate having someone to keep them on track in their work and you'll reap the benefits of being accountable as well.

### > Discuss

Discuss what you learn. Find a friend or relative who has similar interests or who would enjoy hearing about your studies and let them know what's going on in your classes. You'll understand the material better when you have a chance to explain it out loud and will be motivated to stay on task in order to keep up with the conversation.

### > Track

Consider charting your progress. Don't rely on solely on campus counselors; design your own map of completed classes and post it somewhere that is visible daily. There's a certain satisfaction from watching your goals come to life.

### > Balance

Take time for fun. If you're spending all your time working, studying, and watching after the kids, you'll likely suffer in all areas. Everyone needs some down time to re-group. So, set aside a little time every week for a favorite activity. You'll be more productive when you return to your work.

# 7. What should I look for in evaluating distance ed courses?



It's incumbent upon you as a potential distance learner to be sure the course(s) you are taking are offered by reputable sources and for approved credits or CEUs that will help you advance.

## Your career goals Matter

A key consideration regarding distance education should be your career goals, as illustrated by the grid below:

CAREER GOAL	NEEDS & OPTIONS
Person wanting to become a certified addiction counselor	You will need to take the basic required courses from a 2- or 4-year college, plus complete a practicum and supervised experience. While some basic courses can probably be taken online, you probably won't be able to piece together a significant portion of your coursework via distance education—your education will also need to occur in the classroom setting and in worksite settings for practicum, internship and supervised experience requirements. Courses that you take for CEUs, as opposed to college credits, may or may not count towards your degree and should be verified with your advisor.
Person in related field wanting to learn more about addiction counseling but not seeking certification	Depending on the related field you are in, you may have already completed some of the requirements and may find a good portion of coursework you need to complete is available online. CEU or college-credit offerings may both meet your needs.
Person in related field wanting to become certified addiction counselor	Depending on the related field you are in, you may have already completed some of the requirements and may find a good portion of coursework you need to complete is available online. CEU or college-credit offerings may both meet your needs, except for practicum/internship and supervised field experience, but that should be verified ahead of time.
Person currently working as counselor needing to keep certification up-to-date	If you are a practicing counselor who is looking for continuing education credits in order to keep your certification up to date, distance education will offer you some good options and may be a primary format for your needs.

## Before committing, get answers .....

Before committing to any distance learning program find out the answers to the following questions. It's important to be thorough in your investigation of different distance learning opportunities—use the quality checklist at the end of this section to help you make an assessment—each item below gives you specific ways to find the answers to the questions posed.



**> If the course(s) is offered by an entity other than a college, are the CEUs or credits approved by the state accrediting body?**

If not, they may not count towards your certification requirements so be sure to check that out first. Most training or education program vendors will advertise how many CEUs or credits are provided and by which accrediting bodies.

**TIP:** The national and state accrediting bodies are listed in the Resource section of this Guide—check the links or contact them for more information on the requirements for becoming a certified addictions counselor and if you have questions about whether a course or program will meet those requirements.

## > If the course(s) is offered by a school, is the school accredited?

This is the single most important question to ask. There are six regional accrediting agencies that complete a thorough evaluation of the quality of education delivered at each college or university.

### Why is college accreditation important?

#### Here's why:

College accreditation gives the assurance that, as a distance learner, you will be able to attain the same educational outcomes as you would in a traditional classroom-based program.

College accreditation entitles you to the same rights to admissions, orientation, registration, counseling, tutoring, placement, financial aid, and other student services that are available to all other college students, regardless of the delivery method of your classes.

Without accreditation by a nationally recognized accrediting organization, a school is not eligible to participate in government student assistance programs. This means that, as a student, you would not be eligible for federal grant or loan money.

Most employers who offer tuition assistance will not reimburse your tuition if you attend a school that is not accredited.

If you intend to transfer credits from one school to another, you will likely only be able to do so if you attended an accredited college or university.

**TIP:** The colleges listed on the ATTC Network's Directory of Addiction Studies Programs (DASP) are accredited; go to <http://nattc.org/dasp/stateprog/choosestate.asp>.

## > How many years has the organization been offering courses online?

For any organization that offers online classes, there is a natural trial-and-error process involved. The longer the organization has been offering online classes, the greater confidence you can have that the technical and logistical challenges of putting a class online have already been worked out and refined.

## > What's the instructor-to-student ratio in the program you are interested in?

Keeping this ratio within the 1 to 10 ratio is best for online learning, especially if you are interested in getting a graduate degree online. When this ratio gets over 30, there is little, if any, time for the instructor to spend developing and in-depth relationship with individual students. For many programs, a 1 to 20 ratio is average and allows time for instructors to work with students individually. Many distance learning colleges strive for this goal.



## > What is the refund policy in the event that you have to drop a class?

Schedules change quickly, and if you are working full time and are a parent, your time is already tight. If your job workload increases or requires travel, it may not be possible for you to finish an online class. Be clear of the refund policy before you sign up for any online education program.

## > Who is on the Teaching Staff?

The faculty is the backbone of any distance learning program. Are the courses taught by professors or are the courses pre-taped correspondence instruction? If the courses are taught by instructors, what is the background and qualifications of the teaching staff?

## > What is the Program's Reputation?

The reputation of the distance learning program you attend may hinder or enhance your post-graduate employment prospects. In evaluating the reputation of a distance learning program, you should not solely rely on the program's website or marketing materials. Other ways to investigate the reputation of a distance learning program include:

- Talking to others who have participated in the course/program.
- Researching the program's record with the Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been made.
- Talking to existing counselors and other professionals in the field about the reputation of the program you are considering.
- If the course/program is sponsored by a school, make a visit to it.
- Researching the organization in print publications, news articles and on the Internet (note: this is a step to take, but should not be the only research you do).

## > If the program is offered at a college: What Career Services Offered?

Another important consideration in any distance learning program is the extent and quality of its career services program. Research indicates that the greater the resources offered by the career services department, the greater the program's job placement success. You might inquire as to what percentage of graduates find related employment following graduation and whether the career center offers personalized career counseling, job placement assistance, job search seminars, on-line job boards or resume assistance.

All distance learning colleges are not created equal. However, there are plenty of good ones out there if you take the time to do the research up front.

## QUALITY CHECKLIST

HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF A PROGRAM IS OF GOOD QUALITY?	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Are CEUs or credits accepted by the state accrediting body?			
Is the school accredited?			
Does the organization have experience and good track record in addiction studies?			
Is the instructor to student ratio about 1:10?			
Is there a refund policy in place?			
Are there qualified instructors on staff?			
Is the program reputation good?			
Are career services are offered?			

# Current Courses:



## 8. What addiction education distance learning courses are currently available?

### The answer depends

To some extent the answer depends on whether you are already an addiction counselor who is looking for continuing education credits, or someone wanting to enter the counseling field taking courses towards certification. Therefore, this section is divided into two parts:

#### Part One:



New to or entering counseling field – you may be more likely to need courses offered by community or four-year colleges because they generally involve a defined path of classes and requirements towards a degree.

#### Part Two:



Current practitioner wanting continuing education credits – you may be more interested in single topical course offerings.

## Summary of a competent addiction counselor

The skills and competencies that are expected of an addiction counselor are summarized below. This matrix of addiction counselor competencies is from SAMHSA's Technical Assistance Publication (TAP) No. 21 (<http://www.nattc.org/resPubs/tap21/accksa.html>)

COMPETENCY AREA	RELEVANT COURSEWORK FOR THIS COMPETENCY SHOULD COVER:
<b>TRANSDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS</b>	
<b>I. Understanding Addiction</b>	Models/theories of addiction; risk and resiliency factors; social/political/economic/cultural context; effects of psychoactive substances; medical and psychological co-existing factors
<b>II. Treatment Knowledge</b>	Treatment/recovery/relapse prevention models; family/social/community support; importance of research and outcome data and their application to practice; importance of interdisciplinary approaches
<b>III. Application to Practice</b>	Diagnostic criteria, placement criteria and relevant treatment modalities; stages of change; cultural factors; medical/pharmacological resources in treatment; insurance benefits; types and importance of outcome measurements
<b>IV. Professional Readiness</b>	Cultural/disability/other influences; counselor ethics; importance of supervision and continuing ed.; roles and responsibilities of addiction professionals; handling crisis and emergent situations
<b>PRACTICE DIMENSIONS</b>	
<b>I. Clinical Evaluation:</b> (a) Screening	Establishing rapport; gathering client data; screening tools and procedures; helping clients assess how addiction has impacted their lives; determining readiness for change; reviewing treatment options; applying diagnostic criteria and making treatment recommendations; creating client action plans; initiate admission or referral and followup
(b) Assessment	Select and use comprehensive assessment process; analyze and interpret data to determine treatment recommendations; seek appropriate supervision and consultation; document findings and treatment recommendations
<b>II. Treatment Planning</b>	Use assessment information to guide treatment planning; explain findings to client and family; formulate mutually agreeable treatment goals and objectives; identify strategies towards achievement of goals/objectives; help to coordinate supportive activities and resources; inform client of rights; reassess plan at regular intervals

COMPETENCY AREA	RELEVANT COURSEWORK FOR THIS COMPETENCY SHOULD COVER:
III. Referral	Establish and maintain relationships with appropriate referral agencies and resources; explain necessity for and process of referral; exchange relevant information with referral sources within confidentiality constraints; follow up on and evaluate referral outcomes
IV. Service Coordination: (a) Implementing Tx Plan	Interpret screening, assessment and initial treatment planning info; confirm eligibility for treatment; complete administrative procedures for admission; establish and communicate accurate treatment and recovery expectations; coordinate services provided by others
(b) Consulting	Contribute as part of multidisciplinary treatment team; understand and be able to communicate client background, issues, treatment plan; apply confidentiality regulations appropriately; demonstrate respect and non-judgemental attitudes towards clients in all contacts with community professionals and agencies
(c) Continuing Assessment and Tx Planning	Maintain ongoing client contact and involved family members to ensure adherence to treatment plan; understand stages of change and other signs of treatment progress; appropriately adapt and update treatment plan in consultation with client; describe and document process, progress, outcomes using accepted outcome measures; conduct continuing care, relapse prevention and discharge planning; document service coordination; apply placement, continued stay and discharge criteria
V. Counseling (a) Individual	Establish helping relationship with client; facilitate engagement; assist in development of realistic goals; promote positive client knowledge, skills and attitudes, help client recognize and handle behaviors inconsistent with treatment goals; recognize how/when/why to involve significant others in treatment; promote positive health behaviors; facilitate development of basic life skills; adapt strategies to individual clients; apply crisis management skills; help client develop relapse prevention skills and plans
(b) Group	Understand, select and use appropriate group counseling model; handle group dynamics and interactions; facilitate entry/exiting of members; facilitate group growth and progress toward goals; understand process and content and be able to shift focus of group as/if needed; describe and document client progress
(c) Family, Couples, SOs	Understand characteristics and dynamics of families/couples/significant others affected by addiction; know and appropriately use models of family diagnosis and intervention; facilitate engagement of selected family/couple/significant others in treatment process; assist participants to understand interactions between family systems and addiction behaviors; help families/couples/significant others adopt strategies and behaviors that sustain recovery and healthy relationships

COMPETENCY AREA	RELEVANT COURSEWORK FOR THIS COMPETENCY SHOULD COVER:
VI. Client/Family/ Community Education	Provide culturally relevant formal and informal education programs; describe risk and protective factors; sensitize others to issues of culture/ethnicity/age/gender; describe warning signs, symptoms and course of substance use disorders; describe principles and philosophy of prevention, treatment, recovery; understand health issues related to addiction; teach life skills such as stress management, relaxation, communication, assertiveness, refusal skills
VII. Documentation	Understand client record management; protect client rights; prepare accurate screening, intake and assessment reports; record client progress in relation to treatment goals and objectives; prepare accurate discharge summaries; document treatment outcome using accepted methods and instruments
VIII. Professional and Ethical Responsibilities	Adhere to established professional code of conduct; comply with federal, state and local laws and agency rules; interpret and apply information from current literature; obtain appropriate continuing professional education; participate in ongoing supervision and consultation; use strategies to maintain your own physical and mental health



**Organizations offering addiction education courses or programs may or may not offer a distance learning option—** that is part of the research that you as a potential distance learner must do. The following links will help you more easily find the providers of addiction education and you can see if they list any distance learning options among their offerings.

## Part One: Community & Four Year College Courses

The National Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) network offers a searchable list of college courses in addiction counseling (DASP, or Directory of Addiction Studies Programs), some of which may be offered in a distance learning format.

[CLICK HERE](#) or the link below to go to the database and use the drop down menu to find your state:

<http://nattc.org/dasp/stateprog/choosestate.asp>

**More direct links for each organization's distance education offerings are also provided below:**

**TIP:** Colleges house their addiction education courses within different departments so when you are searching check several keywords such as addiction, counselor or counseling, human services, psychology, drug and alcohol, etc.



## Alaska

The University of Alaska at Anchorage and Fairbanks both use the same online learning portal for their distance ed offerings.

## Hawaii

Argosy University - Honolulu

University of Hawaii – Leeward Community College

## Oregon

Blue Mountain Community College

Central Oregon Community College

Chemeketa Community College

Clatsop Community College

Lewis and Clark College

Mt Hood Community College

Portland Community College

Portland State University

Rogue Community College

Southwestern Oregon Community College

Treasure Valley Community College

University of Oregon



## Washington

Bellevue College

Clark College

Columbia Basin Community College

Eastern Washington University

Edmonds Community College

Highline Community College

Lower Columbia College

Northwest Indian College

Pierce College

Seattle Central Community College

Skagit Valley College

Spokane Falls Community College

Tacoma Community College

Washington State University

Wenatchee Valley College

Yakima Valley Community College

## Pacific Jurisdictions

None listed

## Part Two: Sources of Continuing Education Credits

The following entities are likely sources of continuing education courses, some of which may be offered in a distance learning format.

**Because offerings change it is best to subscribe to each organization's training listserv or email notification system in order to stay current on what is being offered.**

**Community and 4-year colleges:** the same institutions listed in the previous section are also likely to offer some distance education continuing education programs which can be found by searching for "continuing education" using the links above as a starting point. Remember to search on several keywords, including addiction, counselor or counseling, human services, psychology, drug and alcohol, etc.



### ATTC:

<http://www.attcnetwork.org>

**SAMHSA:** <http://kap-elearning.samhsa.gov/>

### NIDA:

<http://ctndisseminationlibrary.org/> (unclear if CEUs are available)

### NAADAC:

<http://www.naadac.org>

> Lists approved training providers in a searchable database by state.

### American Counseling Association:

<http://www.counseling.org>

> Offers 17 different one-hour podcasts to ACA members only.

### American Psychiatric Association:

<http://archive.psych.org>

> Sponsors 8 online CME courses including the following text-based distanced ed classes.

### American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists:

<http://www.aamft.org>

> Offers a "Master" DVD series of 6 videos showing counselors handling particular situations with clients.

## State agencies:

> Most state addictions agencies post a training calendar or training resources, including distance education options if they exist, on their websites— those links are provided below:

Alaska Behavioral Health: <http://hss.state.ak.us>

Also, RADACT <http://www.radact.com>

> Offers several correspondence courses on topics including group counseling, motivational interviewing, ethics, cultural issues, confidentiality, bloodborne pathogens, addictive behavior, motivational interviewing and treatment for clients with HIV/AIDS

Hawaii Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division Training Calendar: <http://hawaii.gov/health/substance-abuse/training/index.html>

Also, the link below offers listing of approved providers of distance education  
[http://hawaii.gov/health/substance-abuse/training/distance\\_learning.htm](http://hawaii.gov/health/substance-abuse/training/distance_learning.htm)

Oregon Addictions and Mental Health Division Training Calendar: <http://www.oregon.gov>

Washington Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Training Resources: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov>

Also, UW Dept of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences offers some distance ed courses:  
<http://depts.washington.edu>

Pacific Jurisdictions: none listed

## National conferences that provide CEUs

Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists (SALIS) has links from their website to ATOD conferences:  
<http://www.salis.org>

## Private companies

(this listing is not exhaustive and does not constitute an endorsement of any of the companies below)

Distance Learning Center, LLC:

<http://www.dlcas.com/>

Institute of Addiction Awareness:

<http://ceuinstitute.bizhosting.com/>

CeuUniversity:

<http://www.ceuuniversity.com/>

Laban's Addiction Specific Trainings:

<http://www.last-homestudy.com/>

Center for Addiction Studies and Research:

<http://www.centerforaddictionstudies.com/>

CE Quick:

<http://www.cequick.com>

The Change Companies:

<http://www.changecompanies.net>

## Online Career Colleges:

(this listing is not exhaustive and does not constitute an endorsement of any of the companies below)

Capella University:

<http://www.collegeanduniversity.net>

Walden University:

<http://www.waldenu.edu>

# Resources:

## 9. What other resources should I know about?

### Certification Test Preparation

Ready to Test:  
<http://www.readytotest.com/>

### National Certification

NAADAC (National Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors):  
<http://www.naadac.org>

ICRC (International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium):  
<http://www.icrcaoda.org>

### State Certification Requirements

ATTC links to state certification information:  
<http://www.attcnetwork.org>

Oregon: ACCBO (Addiction Counselor Certification Board of Oregon)  
<http://www.accbo.com/>

Washington: Chemical Dependency Professionals of Washington State  
<http://www.doh.wa.gov>

Alaska: Board of Professional Counselors  
<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us>

Hawaii Department of Health  
<http://hawaii.gov>

**TIP:** Check out this video on becoming an addiction counselor:  
<http://www.youtube.com>

### Distance Learning Entities

US Distance Learning Association:  
<http://distancelearn.about.com>

Distance Education Accreditation:  
Regional Accreditation DETC Accreditation Check  
Any School's Accreditation

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#### Sources:

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1998). *Addiction counseling competencies: The knowledge, skills, and attitudes of professional practice* (Technical Assistance Publication Series # 21). (DHHS Publication No. SMA 98-3171). Rockville, MD: Author.

#### Online sources:

<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdl/winter44/tucker44.html>

<http://distancelearn.about.com/od>

<http://www.distance-learning-college-guide.com/distance-learning-colleges.html>