**HLC 🡪 C-RAC 🡪 SARA**

**Higher Learning Commission**

The Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) created “Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (On-line Learning)”. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is a member of this Council. HLC provides the C-RAC guidelines on their webpage as a resource for its affiliated institutions and its Peer Review Corps.

**C-RAC**

The Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (On-line Learning) were developed to assist institutions in planning distance education and to provide an assessment framework for institutions already involved in distance education and for evaluation teams. They are based on a 2006 report prepared by the General Accounting Office, Evidence of Quality in Distance Education drawn from Interviews with the Accreditation Community and the “Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education,” prepared by the WICHE Cooperative of Educational Technologies (WCET). WICHE is one of four regional U.S. interstate compacts.

The guidelines replace the 2001 Statement of Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, and are to be used in conjunction with the relevant standards and policies of each accreditor. *The Guidelines comprise nine hallmarks of quality for distance education. In their discussions of how their distance education programming fulfills their accreditor’s standards, institutions are asked to include evidence of the extent to which they meet these hallmarks.*

The guidelines are attached.

**SARA**

As of August 11, 2015, Arkansas Tech University is a participant in the SARA initiative, which is a state-level reciprocity process aimed at making the effort to obtain state authorizations more efficient for institutions. It also makes it easier for students to enroll in distance education programs outside of the state in which they reside. Institutions that are members of SARA are authorized to provide education to students from all SARA member states. *States and institutions that choose to become members of SARA operate under a set of policies and standards (C-RAC Guidelines)* that are overseen by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and administered by four regional higher education compacts.

As a member of SARA, the institution agrees to abide by the Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education and policies of the SARA Manual.