

## DISTANCE LEARNING SHOWCASE

# Flexible Learning Comes of Age



The United States Distance Learning Association ([www.usdla.org](http://www.usdla.org)) defines Distance Learning as "The Acquisition of knowledge and skills through mediated information and instruction, encompassing all technologies and other forms of learning at a distance." Inherent in that description are various mediums, content type, delivery systems and student/teacher interaction.

Whether it be satellite, video conferencing, web based, audio or even print, distance learning embodies numerous options. As with most instruction a critical aspect of distance learning success is the level and fulfilment of student and teacher discourse. In other words, distance teaching is as important as distance learning; especially when many faculty members themselves did not learn under a distance education model. Research has shown that, to be most effective, instructors need to learn new techniques of course organisation, content "chunking" and interaction strategies, along with using diverse media and assessing the distant learner.

What it means is that in the end, according to Dr. John G. Flores, Executive Director of USDLA is that "distance learning is dependent upon teacher and student competency coupled with appropriate technology integration, an excellent learning management system, quality content and a menu of various student services including online reference libraries and sources like the Digital Learning Library ([www.learnerslibrary.com](http://www.learnerslibrary.com)) and a complete suite of comprehensive educational resources."

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Pursuing a higher education when classroom attendance is required can be difficult for adult students. For those working a full time job, often with families at home, the thought of what could turn into years of night and weekend classes can be discouraging. When one considers such sacrifices, it can be difficult to see the long-term payoff.

Luckily for ambitious potential students in need of flexibility, an American college degree can be earned from anywhere in the world through distance learning. Northcentral University offers 100% online bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. There are no on-site requirements, so all course work is done completely through the Internet from the comfort of home or office. NCU is the first university in the U.S. to be both regionally accredited and to make this type of learning environment available. NCU offers affordable tuition and convenient payment plans.

To learn more about the opportunities at NCU, visit [www.ncu.edu](http://www.ncu.edu), or call (888) 327-2877.

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<b>Hong Kong: Stuart Stobie</b> Tel: +852 2542 1177 Fax: +852 2545 0550 <a href="mailto:hk@SovereignGroup.com">hk@SovereignGroup.com</a>	<b>U.K.: Simon Denton</b> Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 0555 Fax: +44 (0)20 7930 1151 <a href="mailto:uk@SovereignGroup.com">uk@SovereignGroup.com</a>	<b>U.S.A.: William Byrnes</b> Tel: +1 (305) 474 2468 Fax: +1 (305) 474 2469 <a href="mailto:edu@SovereignGroup.com">edu@SovereignGroup.com</a>
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**TO ADVERTISE Tel: +6 03 2166 6650 Fax: +6 03 2166 6651 Email: [newsweekasia@mongoosemedia.com](mailto:newsweekasia@mongoosemedia.com)**