May independent-study, Internet and correspondence courses count as core courses? Yes, if the following four conditions are met (beginning August 1, 2010):

1. Courses that are taught through distance learning, online, credit recovery, etc. need to be comparable in length, content and rigor to courses taught in a traditional classroom setting. Students may not skip lessons or test out of modules. The course must be four-year college preparatory.

2. All courses must include ongoing access between the instructor and student, as well as regular interaction for purposes of teaching, evaluating and providing assistance. This may include, for example, exchanging of e-mails between the student and teacher, feedback on assignments, and the opportunity for the teacher to engage the student in individual instruction. Any course taken must have a defined time period for completion. For example, it should be clear whether the course is meant to be taken for an entire semester or during a more condensed time frame, such as six weeks, etc.

3. Nontraditional courses should be clearly identified as such on the high school transcript.

Nontraditional courses completed prior to August 1, 2010, will be reviewed under NCAA standards in place prior to August 1, 2010. It is important to remember that all courses need to be rigorous and four-year college preparatory in nature. Students should be encouraged to take courses that are quantitatively and qualitatively the same as courses offered through traditional means, and to take courses that will prepare them for the academic rigors they will face at a four-year college or university.

To read more about this new rule, go to www.eligibilitycenter.org and click the "High School Administrators Enter Here" link, then the "Resources" page and read the documents related to online/virtual/credit recovery courses. May college courses count as core courses? College courses may be used to satisfy core-curriculum requirements if the courses are accepted and awarded credit by the high school for any student and meet all other requirements for core courses. For NCAA Division I only, such courses must be placed on the student's high school transcript. Courses taken at a college will NOT appear on the high school's list of NCAA courses. The high school's list of NCAA courses will include only those courses taught/offered by the high school.