

# **A Bachelor Degree Program in Surveying/Geomatics Offered to Place-bound Students: Measuring Success**

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## **SUMMARY**

Getting a college degree or finding continuing education courses in surveying/geomatics is still a problem in most parts of the world including the United States. There are only a handful of colleges or universities in the U.S. that offer baccalaureate or higher degrees in surveying even by traditional methods. An alternative to the traditional college education is distance learning. This method of education, although an old concept, has new meaning due to advanced delivery techniques. Continuing education has been the primary use of distance learning, but now, we have the means to deliver an entire college degree program to a student thousands of miles away from the campus.

Distance learning in surveying/geomatics is still in its infancy and most are not familiar with some of the delivery techniques. For this reason, it is essential that students, employers, and regulatory agencies are convinced that the quality of the education provided via distance learning can be comparable to what is being delivered on campus in a traditional setting. It is important that the structuring of the program, support it receives from the university administration and delivery technologies are all geared towards maintaining the quality of education the students receive in distance learning programs.

The distance learning program at Michigan Technological University in U.S.A. has been in existence since 1994. This paper presents a historical overview of the program and how it evolved as a unique, reputable, and successful program. It will also discuss the changes that had to be implemented in order to achieve the accreditation by the United State's Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology and to be accepted by Michigan Board of Professional Surveyors. Statistical data related to student opinion and their satisfaction of the program, success it has achieved as measured by the graduate employment and achieving professional licensure to practice is also presented.