



SANTA ANA COLLEGE

Distance Education

Distance Education Faculty Handbook

Santa Ana College

Revision Date Spring 2023

Our mission in Distance Education at Santa Ana College is to provide our students and faculty with the highest quality distance education program. We accomplish this mission by assuring that coursework for our students provides the depth and breadth of a quality post- secondary degree education while ensuring the use of leading-edge technology and excellence in teaching.

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Version History

Spring 2023, Substantive update due to Title 5 changes

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May 9th, 2023 Version Notes:

- Updated Regular and Substantive Interaction Guidelines
- Removed instances of “Blackboard” and “WebAdvisor”
- Updated training to include faculty waiver and new faculty deferment
- Added terminology and definitions
- Updated accessibility resources and replaced 3rd party links with SAC assets

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The Distance Education department and Advisory Group respectfully submit this Distance Education Faculty Handbook to the Academic Senate. It is understood that this plan will be annually reviewed and updated. In the event that any policies are deemed to be in conflict with the Faculty contract, the FARSCCD contract will take precedence.

Preparation to Teaching Online, Credit and Noncredit

1. SAC Definitions and Terminology:

Distance Education

“Distance education” means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) either synchronously or asynchronously.

Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include:

1. The internet;
2. One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
3. Audio conference; or
4. Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.

The definition of “distance education” does not include correspondence courses.

Online

- Taught through the web using the Canvas courseware system. Online courses provide students with an opportunity to complete coursework without attending classes on campus.
- The curriculum for online courses is the same as the curriculum provided in a traditional face-to-face course.
- Sometimes, according to the instructor’s preference and the course content, tests are completed on campus. Arrangements can also be made to complete tests at an alternative site if student(s) do not live near the SAC campus.
- No on-campus meetings (no on-campus instruction)

Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval using the Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the [SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy](#).

Proctored exam dates and meeting dates must be stated in the comments section of Self-Service when students register.

Hybrid (Blended)

- Taught partially online but have regular on-campus meetings. Hybrid courses are courses that have some regularly scheduled meetings on campus that are accompanied by online activities.
- The hours spent on campus vary from course to course, and students should check the schedule carefully to know when the course meets on campus.

Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval with Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the [SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy](#). **Class meeting dates must be stated and scheduled on Self-Service when students register.**

Instructional Methods

- DINT: Fully Online Instruction (O) classes are distance education classes that meet 100% online with no scheduled meeting days. Students log on to Canvas at rscdd.instructure.com and complete work regularly throughout the week. Canvas and other technologies will be required to complete coursework.
- DINT1: Fully Online Live Instruction (OL) classes are distance education classes that only meet in scheduled live streaming Zoom meetings. Students log on to Canvas at rscdd.instructure.com to attend class virtually on zoom during the published course times. Canvas and other technologies will be required to complete coursework.
- DINT2: On-Campus Hybrid Instruction (H) classes are distance education classes that combine scheduled on-campus meetings and online instruction. Students will attend class on-campus during the published course times and will log on to Canvas at rscdd.instructure.com and complete work regularly throughout the week. Canvas and other technologies will be required to complete coursework.
- DINT3: Virtual Hybrid Instruction (VH) classes are distance education classes that combine scheduled live streaming Zoom meetings and online instruction. Students will attend class virtually on Zoom during the published course times and will log on to Canvas at rscdd.instructure.com and complete work regularly throughout the week. Canvas and other technologies will be required to complete coursework.
- DINT4: On-Campus With Virtual Instruction (CV) classes are distance education classes that combine scheduled on-campus and scheduled Zoom meetings. Students will attend class on-campus and will attend class virtually on zoom during the published course times and will log on to Canvas at rscdd.instructure.com. Canvas and other technologies will be required to complete coursework.

2. Curriculum Approval, Credit and Noncredit:

All courses that use distance education as a modality for instruction in lieu of face-to-face instruction must go through the curriculum approval process by completing a DE Addendum and have it approved by the curriculum committee. If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, the course outline of record or an addendum to the official course outline of record shall address how the course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode and how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirements for regular and substantive interaction specified in section 55204 if Title 5. (Appendix A)

Approval of distance education addendums follows the Santa Ana College curriculum procedures.

3. Training and Support, Credit and Noncredit:

Academic Senate has adopted the following faculty readiness criteria for faculty members prior to teaching online/hybrid courses:

Before an instructor is assigned to teach a distance education class for the first time, they must earn a Distance Education Certification by completing training that meets the following outcomes:

1. Explain the underlying principles of the [CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric](#).
2. Demonstrate the correct application of the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric.
3. Showcase the ability to set-up and utilize screen capture software and webcams to record lectures, screen capture, or tutorials that follow online video best practices.

Examples of satisfactory training include completion of one of the following:

- [Santa Ana College's Online Teaching Certification](#)
- Santiago Canyon College Online Teaching Certification
- Completion of the California Community College [@One Online Teaching Certification](#) (<https://onlinenetworkofeducators.org/course-cards/online-teaching-and-design/>) within the last three years.

Canvas training is offered during Professional Development Week and online.

Distance Education departmental team support is always available to faculty and students. Utilize departmental services through:

- DE website: <http://sac.edu/disted>
- Faculty Resources can be access through the [Distance Education Faculty Resources page](#)
- Access Canvas Q&A via the [SAC Faculty Training Course](#)
- Faculty can also email Distance Education at DistanceEd@sac.edu for assistance

4. Waivers, Credit and Noncredit

Training Waiver

A training waiver may be granted to faculty that completed equivalent training that meets the local learning outcomes stated above (See 3.1 to 3.3). Documentation must be provided to the Distance Education Department for review and approval. To receive local DE Certification, faculty must provide documentation demonstrating how they meet their learning objectives. This can be met by providing the following:

- Canvas shell aligned to current CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric
 - Shell must pass Accessibility Section D review at time of submission to be accepted for review.
 - If a shell is determined to not be aligned to the CVC-OEI rubric, faculty will be offered advisement on what is needed, and a second review of the submitted Canvas shell will be done. Faculty requiring a second review will have two calendar weeks to successfully address remaining issues, based on the feedback, to receive the waiver.
- **And** a completed self-evaluation of Canvas shell demonstrating understanding of CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric **or**
- Instructor has a "Quality Reviewed" badged course through the California Virtual Campus (CVC) that can be modified to align with SAC's Template.

New Faculty Training Deferment

New faculty deferment can be granted with the recommendation of their faculty chair and dean and the Director of Distance Education. Once recommended, new faculty may be scheduled with a one semester deferment to allow requirements to be reviewed. Criteria for new faculty deferment must be provided or completed within their first term of employment:

- Instructor has a "Quality Reviewed" badged course through the California Virtual Campus (CVC) that can be modified to align with SAC's Template **or**
- Must be enrolled in SAC's OTC or provide documentation of equivalent certification aligned with DE learning outcomes stated above (See 3.1 to 3.3) **and**
- Previous experience teaching an asynchronous online course including:
 - using SAC's current learning management system
 - 2 or more years of asynchronous online teaching experience

5. DE Faculty Evaluations, Credit and Noncredit

Faculty wishing to perform a self-evaluation of their online class are encouraged to use the California Virtual Campus's (CVC) [Course Design Rubric](#) (opens in a new window). All other evaluations will follow the currently negotiated FARSCCD or CEFA contract.

Visitation Protocols for Online Courses

Classes may be visited by the Canvas support technician for the following reasons.

1. In response to a request from the instructor in the course (questionable student conduct, technical problems, course development review, and pedagogical or technical recommendation).
2. Course evaluation in compliance with FARSCCD Contract, Article 8 (page 42) or CEFA Contract.

Designing a Course, Credit and Noncredit

1. Effective Practices

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) examines issues of educational technology that involve policy and their implementation important to local academic senates. It includes current information regarding a separate DE curriculum review and instructor-student contact. It suggests a variety of effective practices in educational technology appropriate for college governance that will facilitate planning: [Ensuring The Appropriate Use of Educational Technology: An Update For Local Academic Senates](#)

The list of best practice strategies is based on "Institutional Policies/Practices and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education," by the combined efforts of Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Cooperative for Educational Technologies, WCET and Instructional Technology Council (ITC), and UT TeleCampus of the University of Texas System: [Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education](#)

In addition, the Santa Ana College Online Instruction Certification modules are based on a "Learner Centered" approach and active learning techniques as a basis for best practice techniques. The modules are formulated to assist faculty in the development of their online teaching/facilitating techniques.

2. Policies and Checklist for Course Design

Policies, checklists, and resources are available on the [Distance Education Faculty Resources Page](#).

3. Compliance

Accessibility

It is a federal mandate that all online course materials be designed to be accessible to students who are vision and hearing impaired. Unlike just-in-time accommodation in the face-to-face classroom, online course materials must be accessible at the time they are posted for student use. Accessibility workshops are held during Professional Development Week. Accessibility is also a focus area in the SAC Online Instruction Certificate.

There are a few different tools that can be used for video captioning. It is best to contact the Distance Education Office regarding captioning of existing videos or creation of your own videos. We work in conjunction with Educational Multimedia Services and Disabled Student Program & Services (DSPS) to

assist in transcription and captioning. For more information regarding alternate media visit the [CCC Accessibility Center](#) website.

Canvas is fully accessible. However, if you have a visually impaired student in your course, it would be a good idea to notify the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) department and request that they review your course. The DE Office works with DSPS for course access.

[DSPS](#): (714) 564-6295, JSC-108

Authentication

Public Law 110-315: [Higher Education Opportunity Act \(2008\)](#), Section 495

“(ii) the agency or association requires an institution that offers distance education or correspondence education to have processes through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit;”

This regulation reminds institutions that they have the responsibility to validate that the registered student in a distance education or correspondence education course is indeed the same person receiving course credit.

Santa Ana College complies with the authentication regulation through:

- Secure Login: Students logging into our Course Management System, Canvas are verified through the district LDAP server which authenticates the student and allows Canvas access if the credentials are successful. A secured verification through a unique, secure login with the student’s current Self-Service ID/password is used for Canvas course access.
- In course verification techniques such as:
 - Assessment proctoring (instructor or test center led with photo-ID verification ([Online Test Proctoring Form](#)), which can also be found at our website (Appendix E)
 - Best practices that utilize:
 - ✓ Integrated Turnitin or SafeAssign for originality checks
 - ✓ Multiple measures of assessing student achievement
 - Assessments developed using techniques discouraging plagiarism and encouraging originality.
 - Monitoring by faculty of the student-voice in their active engagement contact, via course tools, such as: discussion board, blogs, and wikis.

Academic Integrity

It is a requirement for SAC faculty to define cheating and plagiarism in their course documentation and syllabus. Faculty should have a link to the technology acceptable use policy and student conduct policy. Very often community college students do not understand what plagiarism means. A recommended method would be to hold a discussion forum asking students to write what it means to plagiarize. It should be made clear in the course content that the topic should be course specific. The SAC Library has a prepared [plagiarism guide](#) for students to utilize.

Faculty can assist students in their online class preparation, which will help to improve online course retention rates. SAC offers the Quest for Online Success course that SAC students can take at any time. Have your student logon to Canvas and take the “SAC Quest For Online Success.”:



Regular And Substantive Interaction

When administration receives student complaints about online courses, the top complaint, is that the instructor had not kept in touch with them either by not answering emails promptly or by not posting announcements or discussion responses. SAC has adopted a regular and substantive interaction policy, as mandated by [Title 5](#) regulations. Faculty are encouraged to review the [SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy](#) (Appendix B). The policy pertains to instructor-initiated contact with students mandated by Title 5 regulations. It has been found that student retention and success rates are directly tied to how well faculty communicate with online students. Faculty are required to participate in discussion activities with their students

Copyright

Understanding what copyright is, why it exists, and being able to effectively apply “fair use” guidelines when faculty use copyrighted materials in their courses are essential tools for any educator. However, teaching online generally adds some additional challenging questions to the mix. To ensure faculty are provided with a clear and comprehensive overview of the topic, faculty are requested to read the shared [Copyright 101](#) module created by BYU and review the [Faculty Copyright Basics guide](#) created by SAC Librarians. “Copyright 101” is designed to:

- Increase faculty knowledge and understanding of copyright and licensing issues; and know what it means to say that someone owns the copyright to a creative work.
- Learn more about why copyright law exists and where it all started (the history of copyright).
- Know how to resolve basic copyright/licensing questions and when and who to ask for more help.
- Realize and respect the ethical/moral aspects involved in using materials protected by copyright.
- Be able to answer a variety of copyright questions and solve specific case studies.

The Teach Act: The Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002 extends an instructor’s legal use of copyrighted materials in online instruction at accredited nonprofit education institutions. Applying the TEACH Act is complex and relies on the instructor’s adherence to a specific set of criteria. Faculty are encouraged to speak directly with members of their own institution to understand if specific use of copyrighted materials in their online classes is within the guidelines of the TEACH Act. Faculty may find the resource, [The TEACH Act: How the Law Affects Online Instruction](#) created and shared by Florida State University helpful.

Creative Commons: The friction between copyright law and digital media has led to the development of Creative Commons. Creative Commons (CC) provides flexible copyright licenses that copyright owners may choose to apply to their work. The CC licenses grant more flexibility than traditional copyright but not as much as “public domain.” A work in the public domain may be used freely. A Creative Commons licensed work still requires the user to adhere to specific guidelines but may be as simple as “crediting the author.” The popularity of CC has resulted in the fostering of a culture of sharing and there are now thousands of works online that faculty may use without violating copyright. If the instructor is seeking images or audio for a class, it is in the interest of the instructor to check for CC licensed work. The following link can be helpful in this regard: [“What is Creative Commons”](#).

Unit of Credit

A unit of credit is approximately one hour of class plus two hours of study per week, or three hours of laboratory per week carried through the term. For each hour of lecture/discussion, two hours of preparation are assumed. To receive credit, the student must be officially enrolled in the course. Students not officially enrolled by the proper date will not receive credit for the course, even if they complete all course work.

Last Date of Attendance (Credit)

Financial aid is tied to student course activity. When students are no longer attending a course, their financial aid must stop. Any unearned financial aid shall be returned to the federal government by the institution. Distance education courses determine student attendance through “regular and substantive interaction.” The Department of Education now requires that there be “academically related activity.” Attendance via the log-in statistic in Canvas cannot be used for attendance, nor for the “last date of attendance.”

Regular and Substantive Interaction

All distance education courses must include “regular and substantive interaction” and use it to determine if a student is active in the course. Distance education courses must track which students are still active in the course and drop them when they are no longer active. Instructors must have evidence of the last date of attendance. This evidence and drop policies must be clear on the course syllabus. Faculty should include their student participation expectations in their course syllabus. They should expect students to remain active participants throughout the entire course, completing and submitting assignments. If a student becomes inactive for an extended period, faculty will drop them from the course. See [“Recommended Online Course Outline Additions”](#) for policy wording. (Appendix D)

Noncredit faculty refer to the COR for regular and substantive interaction for your specific course.

State Authorization

Federal Regulation Chapter 34, § 600.9(c)

“if an institution is offering postsecondary education through distance or correspondence education to students in a State in which it is not physically located or in which it is otherwise subject to State jurisdiction as determined by the State, the institution must meet any State requirements for it to be legally offering distance or correspondence education in that State. An institution must be able to document to the Secretary the State’s approval upon request.”

SAC Process:

- Reports are run by Admissions and the DE office on a regular basis identifying students that are not residing in California. Faculty is informed if any out-of-state students are reported.
- If an out of state DE student resides in a state *requiring* state authorization *with a required fee* payment, the Distance Education Office will notify the student and provide information on state authority and contact information for complaint filing and drop the student from the course.
- Online faculty are notified at the start of each semester that they must notify the Distance Education Office regarding any known out of state students (for report verification purposes) and that a known out-of-state student should not be reinstated without notifying Admissions or the Distance Education Office first.

Student Information:

- A webpage with information regarding the regulation and complaint resolution by state is available on the [Admissions & Records](#) website.
- A statement regarding Santa Ana College Out of State regulations is stated at the beginning of the Santa Ana College Application

Important Policies

1. Student Online Readiness

*What you can **require** of your students:*

Faculty can require students in their online course to prepare for online learning, using the “SAC Quest for Online Success” and the “SAC Student Canvas Training”, both of which are available for all students to take at any time on Canvas. Instruct your students logon to Canvas and take the “SAC Quest For Online Success”



In a total time of approximately one hour, students will:

- Understand **Canvas navigation**
- Determine their learning style and study tips for their particular style
- Determine if they have the **technical and study skills required** for online learning
- Master **Netiquette** (online etiquette) for course participation
- Understand the **SAC Academic Honesty Policy**
- Obtain **time management tips and information on the number of hours required** for their online course
- **Learn and Practice a discussion board post and assignment submittal**

Upon successful completion, students will be given instructions on how to screen print and save their grade sheet that will show either "Pass" or "No Pass". This file can be attached as an assignment submittal in your course if you ask for verification.

Canvas Basics for Students: Student Canvas Training

Similarly, under "My Courses", all students are enrolled in "SAC Student Canvas Training". It is a self-paced Canvas course in which students will learn how to:

- Navigate through Canvas
- Update personal information (image)
- Use Canvas tools
- Submit assignments
- Take a test or quiz
- View grades and instructor feedback
- Access Canvas support, help and student resources

DE faculty are encouraged to require or recommend the SAC Quest For Student Success and SAC Student Canvas Training as a pre-course or first week activity.

*What you can **provide** for your students:*

With the learner-centered approach in mind, in your role as a facilitator, use the [Beginning-of-Semester Checklist](#) (Appendix D), and assure coverage of the following key areas:

1. Welcome Email

This email should be sent prior to the course start. Your online or hybrid course should be available by the first day of classes. Many instructors make their courses available earlier, for students to get to know the course and to feel comfortable. Many experienced online students are highly motivated and want to get a jump-start on getting to know their course site and material.

Your email should set a tone for your expectations and should cover:

- A bit about the course itself
- Details about any on-campus meetings/exams
- How they can access your course (through Canvas:<http://rsccd.instructure.com>)
- When your course will be available through Canvas
- Where to start when they get to your course
- What to do if they have questions:
 - If they are unable to login and they are enrolled, they should contact the Distance Education Office
 - If they have course questions - they should contact you (state how to contact)
 - If they have **not** taken an online course before - they should go to the Distance Education site (<http://sac.edu/disted>) and view the video tutorials and take the SAC Quest For Student Success if they haven't yet done so
- Where to find your course syllabi – either attach or tell them where they can find it in your available Canvas course
- Optionally, you may want to create a captioned Welcome video and include the video link

2. Clarity and Organization

There are a few easy methods that can be used to assure clarity for your students:

- Use of **Announcements with email**, check to email – used as a weekly reminder of tasks to do for the course is helpful to students
- **Calendar due dates** in your Canvas course calendar – use due dates in your course and make a calendar menu item for students to easily access
- Canvas Course Navigation Menu has the appropriate items made visible to students
- Utilize the **SAC Template**: This provides a consistent experience for all SAC online students when accessing their courses in Canvas and ensures they have the most up-to-date resources.
- **Rubrics** – integrated into all areas in Canvas
- **Discussion board Question forum**
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** - Consider putting together a list of FAQs and posting it as a working document that you can add to as needed

At Distance Education we would be happy to do a course review to assist!

2. Course Shells

Course shells and faculty assignments in Canvas are created from the data in Datatel. They are run on a regular basis. If you have been assigned to a course for the coming semester and you **do not** see it on Canvas, and it has been input by the division office into Datatel, please contact the Distance Education office and we will be happy to assist you and get you up and running.

3. Check-in and Course Availability

Your student check-in process begins on the first day of classes. All DE courses, online and hybrid, must be made available to students **by the first day of classes**. If students have not checked in by your designated stated syllabus criteria, within the first week of classes, the procedure is to email students being dropped to inform them that they have not checked in and will be dropped from the course.

Faculty can follow this with an email to the students on the waitlist, in waitlist order, to let them know that they may be added if they email the faculty member by the end of the first week of classes (faculty can set the time). Faculty emails the add code to the student on the waitlist using the student's Self-Service email. Once the student is added into Self-Service, it takes a ½ day at most, for a student who is added to the system to be enrolled in the Canvas course shell. The add job from Self-Service to Canvas is run four times a day at approximately 6am, 10am, 2pm and 6pm.

4. Syllabus/Start-up Requirements

All faculty members must provide students with a course syllabus specific to the course. The syllabus is a contract with the students in the class. A clear and detailed syllabus will lead to fewer misunderstandings. Instructors often include detailed descriptions of assignments and rubrics for evaluation. A course syllabus is required and available to students on the first day of class.

Faculty must submit a copy of their respective course syllabi to their division office. [Recommended Online Course Outline Additions](#) can be found at our DE Website (Appendix D)

5. Dropping Students

Per Title 5, Section 58004:

Districts shall, according to procedures adopted by the governing board, clear the rolls of inactive enrollment. Inactive enrollment in a course is defined as follows:

As of each census day, any student who has

- 1. Been identified as a **no-show** , or*
- 2. **Officially withdrawn** from the course, or*
- 3. Been dropped from the course. A student shall be dropped if **no longer participating** in the course, except if there are extenuating circumstances. “No longer participating” includes, but is not limited to, excessive unexcused absences but **must relate to nonattendance**. “Extenuating circumstances” are verified cases of accidents, illness, other circumstances beyond the control of the student, and other conditions defined by the governing board and published in regulations. The “drop date” shall be the end of business of the day immediately preceding the census day.*

Your drop policy must be stated in your course syllabus.

Example:

In this course:

1. Students must **attend one of the mandatory introductory sessions** offered during the first week of classes or they will be dropped for non-attendance.
2. Students must **complete the “Orientation Exercises”** and **participate in Week #1’s discussion board** by Monday of the second week of classes or they will be dropped.
3. Students must participate on the course site with discussion board posts, online quiz submissions, project submissions or other online interactions for that week (blogs, wikis, chat). If two consecutive weeks of non-participation are observed by the instructor, the student may be dropped.

Note:

- You may **not** keep a student enrolled in your course if you do not see academic engagement and regular and substantive interaction.
- **You should attempt to contact students** who have stopped all academically related activities to explain that they will be dropped unless they reengage in substantive assignments within your defined time-period.
- Login statistics, such as “Last Access”, are **not** considered evidence of substantive student participation.

Do not allow students who are not participating to remain in class.

Online and hybrid classes have additional expectations for dropping students. You must document each student’s activity within your class. When a student is no longer completing regular and substantive interaction in your class, you must drop this student. Please consider using assignments, discussions, exams, and Canvas’s Retention Center to help manage students’ regular and substantive interaction. Please document your student’s Last Day of Attendance (LDA) and have it readily available upon request.

Directions on how to make your course unavailable to a particular student on Canvas is located in the [FAQs for Faculty](#) and in the [Beginning-of-Semester Checklist](#).

Bottom line:

- You must have stated criteria for dropping a student and the criteria must be one of academic engagement.
- A student cannot remain enrolled in the course if there is no evidence of academic engagement and regular and substantive interaction.

6. Orientation and Student Readiness

SAC provides student Canvas orientations for both online and face-to-face course students. Faculty should also orient students through their course within the first week of class by creating a video or directions.

SAC Orientations

1. SAC Quest For Student Success can be taken at any time. (See “1. Student Online Readiness”) DE faculty are encouraged to suggest or require the SAC Quest For Student Success as a pre-course or first week activity.
2. SAC Student Canvas Training for Students can be taken at any time. (See “1. Student Online Readiness”)
3. Instructors can provide students with linked web resources, located at the SAC Distance Education website (<http://sac.edu/disted>).

7. Instructor Initiated Regular and Substantive Interaction

It is extremely important that all Distance Education instructors adhere to the approved [SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy](#) developed to follow Title V and the California Community College Chancellor's Office requirements.

All DE courses at SAC, whether hybrid, or online will include regular and substantive interaction as described below:

- **Initiated interaction:** Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. Providing students with an open-ended question forum, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor initiated interaction.
 - **Examples**
 - Use of the Discussion board or blog for a check-in or icebreaker activity, where students will be expected to share and comment on each other’s blog or post.
 - Use of the Discussion board for weekly topics for sharing and commenting.
 - Use of the Discussion board for an open question/comment forum, allowing for instructor and student responses.
 - Use of the Blog for current event posting and comments.
 - Creating a course orientation video for students to familiarize them with the course site.
 - Creating lecture/topic videos to allow for various learning modalities.
- **Frequency:** DE Courses are considered the “virtual equivalent” to on-campus courses. Therefore, the frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, on-campus course.

Regular and Substantive Interaction is part of the course design process. It is a focal area with ideas and suggestions to assist in your online course development, within the SAC Online Instruction Certification. The Distance Education office can also assist you with any questions and ideas in this area.

8. Visitation Protocols for Online Courses

Visitation of online courses may occur by faculty, Distance Education staff or administration for the following reasons:

1. By Distance Education upon student request to ensure that the course is appropriately available to students in the course management system.
2. By the administrating dean, when necessary, to ensure that regular and substantive interaction is taking place as established in the SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy and compliance with Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act (accessibility for disabled students) and the Higher Education Act. Faculty will be notified by email prior to course visitation.
3. By Distance Education in response to a request from the instructor in the course (questionable student conduct, technical problems, course development review, and recommendation).
4. By the administrating dean for a scheduled faculty review.

9. Office Hours

Five (5) office hours per week shall be posted and maintained in accordance with the needs and convenience of the students and community members. Unit members who teach any distance education course or are on approved leave shall have their office hours reduced by the ratio of 1 hour per 3 LHE of online courses taught.

Per the CEFA Contract, office hours do not apply to Noncredit Part-Time faculty.

10. Dealing with Disruptive Students Online

Just as in the face-to-face classroom, faculty may need to deal with disruptive students online.

The document titled "[Handling Disruptive Student Behavior](#)" identifies some of the behaviors that faculty might encounter, gives suggestions for handling disruptive students, and lists what responses to avoid.

11. Email and Contact Archiving

District email is automatically archived and saved to comply with legal mandates. Faculty **must** use District email for communicating with their students. Please contact the [Help Desk](#) for information on how you can better sort your inbox by class.

12. Download a Gradebook (Credit)

At the end of the semester, final grades are submitted through Self-Service. Faculty will also need to provide Admissions and Records with their supporting documents. You can export Canvas Gradebook and send it to designated Admissions personnel. [Instructions on how to export gradebook in Canvas](#)

13. Student Services for Online Students

The offering of student services for distance education students is an important part of their success. [SAC Student Support](#) is available at our website for DE students.

For noncredit, refer to the noncredit Canvas template for student support services.

14. Technical Support

District email is automatically archived and saved to comply with legal mandates. Please use District email for communicating with your students. Please contact the Help Desk for information on how you can better sort your Inbox.

Portions of this document were adapted from Mt. San Jacinto College, Distance Education Faculty Handbook 2013-2014 and Santiago Canyon College's Distance Education Faculty Handbook.



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Appendices

Appendix A: DE Addendum and Sample (Curriculum)

- [Curriculum DE Addendum](#)
- [Curriculum DE Addendum Sample](#)

Appendix B: SAC Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy

Regulations:

Please refer to [Westlaw](#) for the source of the following information.

Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges state:

55200. Definition and Application.

- (a) "Distance education" means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) either synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include:
 - (1) The internet;
 - (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
 - (3) Audio conference; or
 - (4) Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.
- (b) The definition of "distance education" does not include correspondence courses.
- (c) "Accessible" means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.

Credits

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.); section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. § 749d; title 29 United States Code section 794d; and title 34 Code of Federal Regulations section 600.2.

55202. Course Quality Standards.

The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a class conducted through distance education as are applied to in-person classes, in regard to the course quality judgment made pursuant to the requirements of section 55002, and in regard to any local course quality determination or review process. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full involvement of faculty in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2 (commencing with section 53200) of chapter 2.

55204. Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

- (a) Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular and substantive interaction between the instructor(s) and students, (and among students, if described in the course outline of record or distance education addendum), either synchronously or asynchronously, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.
- (b) "Substantive interaction" means engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following:
 - (1) Providing direct instruction;
 - (2) Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
 - (3) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
 - (4) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
 - (5) Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.
- (c) Regular interaction between a student and instructor(s) is ensured by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency:
 - (1) Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and
 - (2) Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.
- (d) Regular and substantive interaction is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.
- (e) For purposes of calculating instructional time in the context of asynchronous distance education, a week of instructional time is any week in which:
 - (1) The institution makes available the instructional materials, other resources, and instructor support necessary for academic engagement and completion of course objectives; and
 - (2) The institution expects enrolled students to perform educational activities demonstrating academic engagement during the week.

Credits

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code; and title 34 Code of Federal Regulations sections 600.2 and 668.3.

Santa Ana College Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy

Regulations:

Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges can be found on the Westlaw site, linked below.

[Title 5, Article 1. Distance Education](#)

Background:

In hybrid or fully online courses, ensuring Regular Effective Instructor/Student Contact guarantees that the student receives the benefit of the instructor's presence in the learning environment both as a provider of instructional information and as a facilitator of student learning. In an on-campus course the instructor is present at each class meeting and interacts via all class announcements, lectures, activities and discussions that take a variety of forms. For example, discussions can be held as part of a lecture format, group work scenarios, or content review sessions. The instructor also serves as a content advisor when he or she answers questions both as they come up in class and as they arise in individual situations. These types of questions are dealt with via the telephone, email, face-to-face office visits, or live electronic interaction utilizing tools within the LMS for virtual conferencing.

Title 5 regulations do not make a distinction between regular and distance education courses beyond the need to have an approved curriculum approval process and the need to ensure Regular and Substantive Interaction. The guidelines do say that quality assurances within the regulations apply to all DE courses, which include online, hybrid and remote instruction courses. Therefore, it is assumed that those qualities of Regular and Substantive Interaction described above for the on-campus environment, should also be applied to the distance education situation. The DE Guidelines require colleges to develop a policy regarding Regular and Substantive Interaction that addresses "the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session".

Santa Ana College Policy:

All DE courses at SAC, whether fully online, hybrid or remote instruction will include the Regular and Substantive Interaction as described below:

Regular and Substantive Interaction

- **Instructor-Initiated interaction:** Instructor-initiated contact refers to instructors contacting their students. Examples of instructor-initiated contact are, but are not limited to, providing regular interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. Other aspects of instructor-initiated contact are providing timely assignment feedback, regularly clearing the roster of students who are not attending (attendance definition below), regularly participating in class discussions, and contacting students with additional feedback, such as recognition or helpful critiques of course participation or assignment rigor, assignment feedback timelines, examples, and other instructor-initiated contacts may be clearly defined in the syllabus and where relevant or helpful in the course.
- **Student-Initiated Contact:** Student-Initiated contact refers to students' ability to contact their instructor or other students in the course. Clear instructions should be provided by the instructor for preferred contact methods and expected response times.

- **Student-to-Student Interaction:** Student-to-Student Interaction refers to students' ability to contact each other in the course. Student-to-Student Interaction is required in online classes at SAC unless it is not practical or possible for a specific class. If student-to-student contact is not required in a class, the rationale must be described in the Distance Education Addendum. Instructors are responsible for providing Student-to-Student interaction, such as group work, peer reviews, discussions, chats, study groups, etc. in the Course Management System.
- **Frequency:** DE Courses are considered the "virtual equivalent" to on-campus courses. Instructors will have regular contact throughout the week with students. Communication methods such as, discussions participation, assignment feedback, or live or asynchronous communication may be used.
- **Establishing Instructor Communication Expectations** An instructor and/or department established policy describing the frequency and timeliness of instructor-initiated contact and instructor feedback, will be posted in the syllabus and/or other course documents that are made available for students when the course officially opens each semester. Including a Regular and Substantive Interaction policy in the syllabus is strongly encouraged.

Sample Types of Contact:

Regarding the type of contact that will exist in all SAC DE courses, instructors may use any the following types of resources to initiate contact with students and among students:

- Interactive tools, such as regular discussions, blogs, wikis, and chat, within the course management system, with appropriate active instructor participation.
- General email/messages
- Meaningful announcements in the Course Management System.
- Timely and meaningful feedback for student work.
- Instructor prepared e-lectures or introductions in the form of e-lectures to any publisher created materials (written, recorded, broadcast, etc.) that, combined with other course materials, create the "virtual equivalent" of the on-campus class.
- Instructor-created videos with helpful information, instruction, and/or with the intent of humanizing the classroom.

Appendix C: Recommended Online Course Outline Additions

[Recommended Course Outline Additions](#)

Appendix D: Beginning of Semester Checklist

[Beginning of Semester Checklist](#)

Appendix E: Online Course Test Proctoring Form

[Distance Education Offsite Proctoring Form](#)