AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

References:
Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard, II.A.1

Definition
Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. Instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements that may be imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S. Code Section 794d). (SOURCE: *Distance Education Guidelines, 2008 Omnibus Version*)

Authentication
Federal regulations require the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to assure distance and correspondence education programs have processes in place to verify student identity. The authentication approach used by the District is a secure login and password through the campus portal. In addition, the District may use technology authentication systems or proctoring.

Course Approval
Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate approval is mandatory if any portion of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided through distance education.

The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures established by the District. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

When approving distance education courses, the Curriculum Advisory Committee will certify the following:

Standards for Approval: The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.

Course Quality Determinations: Determinations and judgments about the quality of the distance education course are made with the full involvement of the Curriculum Advisory Committee approval procedures.

Instructor Contact: Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education includes regular and effective contact between instructor and students through discussion forums, messaging, assignment and quiz feedback, group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or

study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, email, or other activities. **Note:** Email communication that includes personally identifiable information about a student must be with the District-authorized email system (Pipeline email or the District's Learning Management System (LMS) Email).

Duration of Approval: All distance education courses approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes of the course outline.

Teaching Online

Authority for faculty member assignment to teach any class, including courses delivered at a distance, resides with department chair with final approval from the area dean. (See BP 7210 Academic Employees)

Faculty need to receive appropriate training and support in order to ensure a high quality and consistent learning environment for students. The District provides three different types of programs: Training Program, Mentoring Program, and an Ongoing Program.

Training Program: First Time Teaching Online at SBCC and Creating New Content

A faculty member who is assigned to teach online who has no SBCC online teaching experience and who will be creating his/her own materials for the online class must participate and complete the online faculty member training offered by the Faculty Resource Center (FRC) before he/she can teach online. The FRC training consists of the following time commitments:

- Attend four three-hour, small group workshops during the semester of development with other new online faculty
- Meet no less than five times during the semester of development with the FRC staff for course design specifics or advisement
- Faculty members who live out of the local area will meet separately and virtually with the FRC staff.

In addition to the time commitment for training, faculty will update the supplemental material as required for course approval and submit it to the Curriculum Advisory Committee. Exceptions to the Training Program may be recommended by the department chair and reviewed by the FRC and Dean for Distance Education.

Mentoring Program: First Time Teaching Online at SBCC and using Existing Content

A faculty member who is assigned to teach online who has no SBCC online teaching experience and who will be using materials developed by another online faculty member for that class must be mentored for the first semester by an experienced SBCC online faculty member who meets the following qualifications:

- The mentor must be an SBCC faculty/staff member.
- The mentor must have taught online at SBCC, in the same department, for at least two semesters. If there are no faculty members teaching online in the

department, the mentor will be determined by the faculty member, department chair, and administration.

The mentor will meet regularly throughout the term with the new online faculty member. The mentor and new online faculty member will write a report summarizing the interaction and highlight any strategies that worked well both in the online class as well as in the mentoring relationship. This report will help inform the District on what works and doesn't work in the mentoring program.

The mentor/mentee arrangement must be approved by the department chair and the Dean for Distance Education prior to beginning any mentorship program.

Ongoing Program
Experienced SBCC online faculty may request support for an SBCC mentor for one term. The goal is to work on strategies to improve student success. The mentor can be from the same or different department as the mentee but must be an SBCC faculty/staff member. The mentor will meet regularly throughout the term with this experienced online faculty member focusing on specific tasks or topics that both have agreed to prior to the mentorship.
- The mentor must be an SBCC faculty/staff member.
- The mentor must have taught online at SBCC, in the same department, for at least two semesters. If there are no faculty members teaching online in the department, the mentor will be determined by the faculty member, department chair, and administration.

The mentor will meet regularly throughout the term with the online faculty member. The mentor and online faculty member will write a report summarizing the interaction and highlight any strategies that worked well both in the online class as well as in the mentoring relationship. This report will help inform the college on what works and doesn't work in the mentoring program.

The mentor/mentee arrangement must be approved by the department chair and the Dean for Distance Education prior to beginning any mentorship program.

The FRC will provide workshops for experienced online faculty during each in-service. They will also provide a course in the District's LMS to include best practices based on our understanding of the research literature as well as pedagogical strategies suggested by SBCC and other faculty. This will serve as a reference for faculty interested in using the District's LMS.

Course Quality Standards
The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a course conducted through distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses and in regard to any local course quality determination or review process.

The following standards have been adopted by the Online Education Initiative, a project of the State Chancellor's Office. Faculty creating and teaching online courses are encouraged to adhere to these standards.

1. The instructor knows and understands current effective practices for online teaching that support student success, and can apply that knowledge to the design and implementation of his/her course.
   a. The instructor can cogently discuss barriers to and support of student success within the online environment.
   b. The syllabus and/or course materials include explicit policies and procedures, such as a communication policy, that address and support regular and effective contact;
   c. The instructor incorporates tools and/or strategies to assess student readiness.
2. The instructor effectively uses a range of technologies tools -- both within and outside of the LMS -- that support student learning and engagement.
   a. The instructor incorporates tools that meet the content demands of the course;
   b. The instructor uses a variety of tools for communicating with students, delivering content, assessing student learning, and analyzing effective teaching;
   c. The instructor incorporates a variety of tools that meet the various learning needs of his/her students.
3. The instructor knows and understands the value of active learning, participation, and collaboration within the online classroom, and applies this knowledge to the design of his/her course.
   a. The instructor incorporates a variety of tools that support interaction and community;
   b. The instructor promotes active learning through collaborative activities;
   c. The instructor facilitates and monitors appropriate student-student interactions;
   d. The instructor fosters an environment that welcomes and engages each individual learner.
4. The instructor knows and understands the importance of teacher-student communication, and applies this knowledge in various ways within the course.
   a. The instructor uses a variety of tools for contacting students;
   b. The instructor models and facilitates appropriate communication;
   c. The instructor sets clear expectations through course policies and well-written assignments with rubrics;
   d. The instructor provides timely and useful feedback.
5. The instructor knows, understands, and facilitates legal, ethical, and safe technology use.
   a. The instructor knows and follows guidelines for fair use, copyright, and acceptable use;
   b. The content, grading, and feedback comply with FERPA guidelines;
   c. The instructor discusses and incorporates Netiquette within the course.
6. The instructor knows and understands the implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, and ensures that course material is accessible.

a. The instructor provides a link to campus services, and/or discusses available services with the course;
b. The instructor includes accessible material, including multi-media;
c. The instructor is aware of accessibility issues with the LMS.
7. The instructor designs and utilizes a variety of formative and summative assessments to help students achieve the course learning objectives.
a. The instructor includes clear learning outcomes and explains the connection between these outcomes, course content, and assessments;
b. The instructor uses a variety of assessments appropriate to the objectives;
c. The instructor includes formative feedback and/or grading rubrics to help students achieve the learning objectives;
d. The instructor includes opportunities for self-assessment.
8. The instructor knows and understands methods for collecting data regarding student learning, and uses this data to modify teaching and course content.
a. The instructor uses course tools and tracking data to monitor student participation and performance;
b. The instructor uses feedback from quizzes and assignments to modify content delivery and/or activities.
9. The instructor participates in ongoing professional development.
a. The instructor attends workshops and/or conferences to stay current in distance education trends, theories, and tools;
b. The instructor belongs to professional organizations or groups to maintain subject-matter expertise.
10. The instructor is able to arrange media and content that supports student learning, success, and progression through the course.
a. The instructor explains to students how they should proceed through the course;
b. The instructor appropriately and effectively uses tools within the LMS;
c. The instructor can create and modify content within the LMS.

Accessibility

Ensuring that distance education courses, materials and resources are accessible to students with disabilities is a shared institutional responsibility. Faculty need to receive appropriate training in order to ensure that they understand what constitutes accessibility, and institutions must provide faculty with both the necessary training and resources to ensure accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.), section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S. Code Section 794d), and Government Code Section 11135 all require that accessibility for persons with disabilities be provided in the development, procurement, maintenance, or use of electronic or information technology by a community college district using any source of state funds. (See Legal Opinion M 03-09). Title 5 Section 55200 explicitly makes these requirements applicable to all distance education offerings.

"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. A 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.

Distance education resources must generally be designed to provide "built-in" accommodation (i.e. closed or open captioning, descriptive narration) and/or interface design/content layout, which is accessible to "industry standard" assistive computer technology in common use by persons with disabilities.

Distance education courses, resources, and materials must be designed and delivered in such a way that the level of communication and course-taking experience is the same for students with or without disabilities. (Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines (January 2011))

Proctoring
Distance education courses may require exams to be taken in a proctored setting. Faculty will clearly communicate in their syllabus any proctoring requirements along with options to complete.

Test Proctoring Fees
There is no authority that permits the District to charge students a fee to cover the costs of having someone present while students are taking tests to ensure that the students do not cheat on the tests. (CCCCO Student Fee Handbook, 2012)

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