



# Distance Education Handbook

Riverside Community College District

April 2020

# Distance Education Handbook

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## Introduction

### Purpose

This Distance Education Handbook is designed for Norco College faculty to better understand the mission, vision, values, policies and procedures in order to effectively support students enrolled in online, hybrid or lecture courses using the District Learning Management System (currently Canvas).

Please consult the DE Handbook regularly. Accessible, equitable and sound course design, instruction and evaluation will be informed by the many best practices presented by Norco College Distance Education, Riverside Community College District Distance Education and the State Chancellor's Office within this Handbook. Active hyperlinks and reliable contact information in this Handbook will provide faculty with essential offices and online destinations to find support whenever necessary.

## Norco College Distance Education

### Norco College Online



[Norco College Online](#) is a central hub for the public to access news, information and resources related to faculty and student experience in a virtual environment. Visit Norco College Online to access Canvas training materials, to request RCCD technical support, for [Online Student Services](#), for the latest [Norco College Online Newsletter](#), and more.

### Institutional Research in Online and Hybrid Instruction

Online instruction requires metrics to determine benchmarks based upon prior course delivery from colleagues that may not be familiar or accessible. Fortunately, the Office of Institutional Research maintains an ongoing database of research for faculty to know and use related to success, retention and efficiency of students in hybrid, lecture and online courses by discipline and by course. Visit [the Institutional Research online resource](#) to find out about your discipline or course when creating your courses. Annual data is made available to all faculty to research five-year trends in their course or discipline. Such data informs decision making in shared governance and planning bodies at Norco College. We take seriously the intention to reduce any gaps in equity in the areas of success, retention and efficiency to ensure quality instruction

in all modalities. Students deserve a quality educational experience no matter what modality they choose.

### Student Equity Plan

This Distance Education Handbook seeks to address issues identified in the [Norco College Student Equity Plan 2019-2022](#). Online instruction allows students to attend classes who would not otherwise be able to sacrifice time away from familial, employment and personal responsibilities. Distance Education is vital to accomplish Norco College's goals to increase access to students in the service area with its increasing population. This growth affords opportunity to improve, to expand and to innovate online instruction, course design, and assessment of courses, certificates and degrees.

### California Virtual Campus – Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI)

California Community College Chancellor's Office provides guidance for Statewide Distance Education programs through the [California Virtual Campus – Online Education Initiative \(CVC-OEI\)](#). CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric is the gold standard for online instruction and is the basis for membership in this Consortium of California Colleges with online courses, certificates and degrees. Future growth of Norco College Distance Education will necessitate the increasing awareness and use of this model for design and assessment in order to ensure compliance with Title V, ADA and ACCJC standards for online education. Membership in the CVC Exchange allows member colleges completion credit for students who identify the member college as their home campus and FTES to the college which provides instruction. CVC-OEI is a vital way for California Community College students to continue education towards the completion of certificates and degrees. CVC Exchange requires faculty training, course auditing and full compliance with Title V, ADA and ACCJC standards for all courses, certificates and degrees.

## Strategic Planning

2030 Educational Master Plan (see pages 27-28)

Strategy 6 to Improve College Going Rates: Online Education

See 2030 Goal 1, 2025 Objective 1.3

*Note: The following text is taken directly from the Norco College 2030 Educational Master Plan*

Another strategy to improve college attendance rates in our area entails online education. Over the past Accreditation cycle, Norco College has increased online FTES by a total of 7 percent including online courses in all four Schools. Currently, Norco College's distance education offerings (online and hybrid courses) impacts nearly one-fourth of all enrollment (23 percent in Fall 2018). Online education enables greater access to college courses as well as progress toward certificates and degrees awarded for students including men of color, disabled, and foster students, whose lives need the flexibility that face-to-face lecture courses do not permit.

Norco College's values and goals in the Educational Master Plan envision an exciting opportunity to double our online student population. This can easily be achieved through our natural growth in the region's college eligible population and continued strategic partnerships in dual enrollment with high schools and online high school programs. By 2030, one or more online Associate of Arts degrees should be created, vetted, and implemented. Finally, Norco College should consider ongoing participation in online educational communities in the College District, throughout the state, and nationally, to expand the online student population and partner with organizations/institutions with shared goals and best practices.

Therefore, Norco College needs a broader vision and commitment for distance education among our administration, faculty, staff and student populations. A robust online education program touches all aspects of Norco's community. The following elements of Strategy 6 must be funded, implemented, and facilitated over the next decade of the Educational Master Plan.

First, a Director of Online Education could lead this vision to actualization. Next, administration and staff need to support Norco's online students in onboarding, orientation, counseling, and other services to ensure success in registration and completion. Hiring enough faculty to anticipate growth in online courses and programs ensures the quality, rigor and attention to detail in creating and implementing online certificates and degrees.

Faculty must be afforded the training and resources in the following areas to:

- foster online offerings across all disciplines and courses
- increase awareness of the merits of online education
- inform the andragogy of online instruction at Norco College
- receive stipends for the development of courses, certificates, programs and degrees
- host and to attend events pertaining to online education
- utilize RCCD Best Practices for Course Design created by District Distance Education in conjunction with the Online Education Initiative
- implement best practices for online instruction from a national perspective
- participate in faculty inquiry and learning communities
- adjust for the demands of Statewide accessibility and equity goals and metrics, including informing the College about gaps between online and face-to-face student populations

Finally, online education requires ample support for students including training in the use of Canvas and third-party applications. Online students must know about the wealth of services available with registration, including Counseling, Disability Resource Center, Health Services, Learning Resource Center, Library, Special Programs, Tutoring, and more. Low income students need on-campus resources made available to them to make up for access issues that may elude them because of their income situations.

The online education community must utilize tools, best practices and ideals from Guided Pathways, Guide for Evaluating and Improving Institutions, @One, and RCCD Distance

Education to become a model institution for online education in the region, the State and the nation.

## Faculty Guide

### Norco College Distance Education Committee

Norco College Distance Education Committee is a standing committee of the Academic Senate. Norco College [Academic Senate by-laws Section 7.A-B](#) tasks this committee with development of guidelines for distance education courses and recommendations to the Senate policies and procedures for distance education training of faculty and students. Distance Education Committee advises strategic planning bodies regarding institutional needs and best practices for distance education. Distance Education Committee members participate in shared governance processes essential to the ACCJC standards for accreditation, particularly Standard II A.1.

Distance Education Committee meetings currently meet on the third Wednesday of each calendar month during Fall and Spring semesters. Meeting Agendas and Minutes are distributed to the College constituencies at least 3 days before meetings occur. [Distance Education Committee pages](#) on the Norco College Website store past Agendas and Minutes for the public record in support of Accreditation.

All students, staff, faculty and administrators are welcome to attend regular meetings. Membership includes representation from each of these areas including guests from the District and general public. Participation is welcomed in order to strengthen the distance education program and to fulfill Strategy 6 to increase access indicated in the 2030 Educational Master Plan.

### Distance Education Committee Statement of Purpose

The distance education committee develops guidelines for distance education courses and recommends to the Senate policies and procedures for distance education training of faculty and students. The committee advises strategic planning committees on institutional needs and best practices for distance education.

### 2019-2020 Membership

Melissa Bader, Chair of Chairs, Arts & Humanities (COM)

Michael Bobo, Co-Chair, Arts & Humanities (AHL)

Damon Nance, Co-Chair, Dean, Technology and Learning Resources (COM)

Sarah Burnett, Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS)

Vivian Harris, Arts & Humanities (COM)

Marissa Iliscupidez, Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS)

Sandra Popiden, Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS)

Walter Stevens, Arts & Humanities (AHL)

Dana White, Business & Management (BEIT)

Suzanne Witmer, STEM (SCI-KIN)

### RCCD Distance Education

Norco College Distance Education works under the direction and supervision of the Office of Riverside Community College District Distance Education located at the District Offices.

As stated on their [official website](#) the mission of RCCD Distance is to extend access to learning through distance education.

Objectives:

To facilitate learning at a distance, Distance Education provides:

- Educational technology to the colleges, faculty, and students to support the delivery of online-based courses and services
- Professional development and training for faculty
- Expertise and experience
- Canvas management, production and problem solving.

All matters of training, technical support, enrollment, and troubleshooting your course content should be directed to their attention. See the [Faculty Help & FAQs](#) page for more information and details related to specific issues encountered in the setup, management and maintenance of your Canvas courses.

### Distance Education Curriculum

Norco College Distance Education Committee participates in the Curriculum approval process through supporting faculty with their Distance Education Addendum submissions to the Norco College Curriculum Committee.

The Riverside Community College District Curriculum Committees have prepared a 2019 Update to the Curriculum Handbook which contains the policy and procedures related to Distance Education on [pages 39-42](#).

Curricunet Meta is the starting point to launch a DE Addendum which will be forwarded to the Norco College Curriculum for review. This approval process is stated in the Norco College Curriculum Handbook located on the Norco College Curriculum Committee webpage.

Faculty interested in preparing a Distance Education Addendum should consult with their District discipline faculty as well as a Distance Education Committee member in order to ensure their proposal has the necessary support to move from the College, Technical Review, District and Board Approval process. Addendums must indicate ways in which instruction will clearly make up for the loss of face-to-face instructional hours through the use of various online applications and Learning Management System resources and integrated third-party

applications.

The Curriculum approval process must be rigorous in order to ensure our courses are vetted for Federal, State and local standards and best practices in course design, accessibility, assessment and equity as well as to meet the ACCJC accreditation standards.

### Canvas Certification

Canvas is the LMS platform that is used by the Riverside Community College District, and while third-party LMS platforms are available and widely used, they must be integrated with Canvas when possible. This will solve issues of accreditors being able to view discussion forums and to verify that online assignments make up a student's grade.

Instructors who plan to teach in any mode which requires the use of Canvas (online, hybrid or web-enhanced) must first complete Canvas training at RCCD. This can be done fully online through Online Canvas Academy, OR face-to-face at your college with one of the District Educational Technology Trainers. In addition to basic instruction on Canvas, the Canvas training covers administrative policies and procedures for online instruction, 508 compliance & accessibility, accreditation information, as well as additional district services and resources available for distance education instructors. Check with Norco college's trainer for a current schedule of availability and training sessions.

For the Online Canvas Academy, sessions open each 1st of the month and close on the 30th day of the month. You can enroll at any time during the month-long session, but keep in mind - each session closes on the 30th of the month.

If you are ready to get started with Canvas [sign up for Canvas Certification Training](#).

Faculty can contact RCCD Distance Education staff directly. You will find their contact information on the [Faculty Training Calendar page](#).

If you need more help, contact RCCD Distance Education via the [Faculty Assistance](#) form.

### Guidance on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Online Setting

Norco College Disability Resource Center

#### DRC Verification:

Faculty members will receive letters verifying a student's eligibility for DRC services from the DRC office. Many faculty members have already received these letters early in the term from students. Please make sure to continue providing approved academic adjustments (i.e. extended test time) through Canvas.

The following are some guidelines for how best to support students with disabilities during this transition:



Testing:

- All Testing, including those students approved for extended time, should move to online format.
- Students with extended time authorizations need to have adjustments made in Canvas to allow for the extended time (please see attachment on how to extend test time in Canvas).
- The following link provides a step-by-step process on “how to” extend test times: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-13053-4152276279>
- Please note that as more students enroll in DRC services, faculty may receive updates on students in their courses who are approved for testing adjustments. Changes to those students’ test times should be made at that time.

Lectures and Note taking:

- For most online teaching modalities that include a written record, such as PowerPoint, Word Docs, and Canvas discussion boards, note taking should not be necessary.
- Instructors may post their own lecture notes.
- For those who simulate a face-to-face classroom, such as streaming videos or Zoom meetings, captioning and recording may be necessary. Please refer to the directions below on real-time captioning services.

Alternate Media:

- DRC typically assists with converting materials in alternate format based on documented student need.
- DRC will prioritize students who are unable to access materials at all without a different format (such as Braille, audio recordings, enlargements).
- Instructors can assist DRC by ensuring that the materials posted online are created in accessible formats. such as Word Docs and PowerPoints instead of PDFs. PDFs are often not screen readable.
- Please contact [Matt.Allen@norcocollege.edu](mailto:Matt.Allen@norcocollege.edu) for any support needed.

Remote Live Sign Language Interpreting (ASL Interpreting)

(This only applies if a student in your course has been approved for interpreting. You will have been notified by DRC if this is the case.)

- Email [Katie.Arnhart@norcocollege.edu](mailto:Katie.Arnhart@norcocollege.edu) with the date and time you plan to lecture.
- Once you have the Zoom meeting set, please email Katie the meeting invite. Katie will provide that invite to the assigned Interpreter.
- With the meeting invite, an Interpreter can join and provide live interpreting services.
- The deaf student will be able to “pin” the Interpreters’ video, making it the primary video on their screen.

### Remote Live Captioning (Real-Time Captioning)

(This only applies if a student in your course has been approved for real-time captioning. You will have been notified by DRC if this is the case.)

- Email [Katie.Arnhart@norcocollege.edu](mailto:Katie.Arnhart@norcocollege.edu) with the date and time you plan to lecture.
- Once you have the Zoom meeting set, please email Katie the meeting invite. Katie will provide that invite to the assigned Captionist.
- Once the meeting has started you will need to share the API link with the Real Time Captionist. This will give them the right to live caption.

Additional guidance will be provided as needed. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the DRC office for support. Email: [DRC@norcocollege.edu](mailto:DRC@norcocollege.edu)

### Distance Education Checklist

#### DE checklist for Hybrid and Online Courses

We are glad that you will be teaching an Online or Hybrid course for the Riverside Community College District. To make it easier to plan your course, here is a checklist of things to do and items to include.

#### ✓ Training for Distance Education (required by CA Ed Code)

All faculty teaching online or hybrid courses at RCCD must use the District learning management system, Canvas, and must complete training. This can be done in several ways: RCCD's Online Canvas Academy (OCA), face-to-face training at Riverside City, Norco, or Moreno Valley College, or approved training taken at another college. For details please see the [Faculty Training page](http://opencampus.com/faculty/faculty_training.html) at [http://opencampus.com/faculty/faculty\\_training.html](http://opencampus.com/faculty/faculty_training.html).

#### ✓ Create a Syllabus (required by ACCJC)

Include course policies, required materials, a plagiarism policy, and a statement directing students to Disability Resources at your college.

#### ✓ Create an Introduction Module for your Course (Best practice in online course development)

Be sure to include contact information (including the times when you are and when you're not available), your usual response time, expectations regarding the amount of time that students should be spending on their course per week, and an online attendance policy. Inform students about how to navigate the course, how to find assignments and quizzes, and how to find the gradebook and feedback. Consider using the Quest for Success module as a way to prepare your students for their online course. Also consider making an introductory video for your course. Distance Education provides this service to all DE faculty.

#### ✓ Create Modules for Other Course Content (Best practice in online course development)

Chunk learning material in modules – these modules can be organized by unit, by topic, or by week. Consider publishing your material a bit at a time so that students are working on the same material together. Include student learning outcomes for each module, in language that makes sense to students.

- ✓ [Provide Means for Regular and Substantive Contact \(required by CA Ed Code, U.S. Dept. of Ed regulations, and ACCJC\)](#)

Instructors must initiate regular and substantive contact with students and **there must also be ways for students to interact with each other in a meaningful way** in DE courses. Remember to let students know you're not going to be available if an emergency arises. Consider using two or more methods listed below in your course for regular and substantive contact.

- Weekly content-based announcements in Canvas
- Threaded discussions of course content in Canvas with required student-to-student interaction.
- Regular instructor participation in threaded discussions within Canvas Instructor-created lectures
- Timely and frequent feedback for student work
- Group or individual meetings
- Class events such as orientations and workshops
- Instructor-initiated contact by Canvas inbox, email, telephone, or chat
- Video conferencing, chat, audio recording through ConferZoom

- ✓ [Ensure Course Materials are Accessible \(required by CA Ed Code, and Federal regulations\)](#)

- Any images will have alternative text to provide access for students with visual impairments.
- Videos will have accurate closed captioning
- Audio recordings will include transcripts
- Pages, Word docs and PowerPoints will use structured headings (i.e. Header 2 for section headings) accessible to a screen reader (use the accessibility checker in Canvas or UDOIT)
- Hyperlinks will be presented using meaningful link text rather than URLs
- Content will provide adequate color contrast, font size (12-14), and font style (sans serif) to ensure readability
- Any PDF files will be text-based, not scanned, and use true headings (e.g. created with the styles menu in MS Word)

- ✓ [If You Use a Publisher Created Learning Management System](#)

Many instructors make use of publisher-created course management systems (e.g.,

Pearson’s MyLab products, Cengage materials, WebAssign, etc.). California Ed Code states that you must incorporate class management and supervision capabilities within a learning management system that is free of cost to students (this is Canvas for RCCD students). It is not sufficient to provide only a link within Canvas to the publisher’s material. In addition, the following elements are required by CA Ed Code:

- Ensure that publisher materials meet Section 508 requirements (sometimes accessible material is indicated by icons in the publisher material, also videos should be captioned)
- Ensure that students have a secure login and that their privacy is safeguarded
- List the materials that you’re using under “required materials” in your syllabus
  
- Consider integrating the publisher’s materials with Canvas so that assignments, quizzes, and grades all appear in Canvas

### [Canvas Instructor Guide](#)

Canvas provides guides for most of their resources built into the default accounts in the [Instructor Guides](#). If you are new to Canvas, please take time to navigate these links. Screen shots will provide you step by step information in setting up your course and implementing your course plan.

We hope you consider this an opportunity to enhance your instruction with new tools students find engaging and enjoyable. Online education is a standard method of instruction around the world with proven retention and success when designed according to [best practices](#).

[RCCD Distance Education](#) and [Norco College Distance Education Committee](#) have many qualified faculty with insight and experience in online instruction. Reach out to your discipline and department peers whenever possible to brainstorm as you plan for an online or hybrid instruction.

Click on any of these to help you in the areas of your concern. Instructor Guides have been last updated February 2020.

Canvas Provides Instructor Guides on the following topics:

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Analytics](#)
3. [New Analytics](#)
4. [Announcements](#)
5. [Assignments](#)
6. [Attendance \(Roll Call\)](#)
7. [Calendar](#)
8. [Chat](#)
9. [Collaborations](#)

10. [Commons](#)
11. [Conferences](#)
12. [Course Import Tool](#)
13. [Course Navigation](#)
14. [Courses and Sections](#)
15. [Discussions](#)
16. [ePortfolios](#)
17. [External Apps \(LTI\)](#)
18. [Files](#)
19. [Global Navigation](#)
20. [Grades](#)
21. [Groups](#)
22. [Inbox](#)
23. [Modules](#)
24. [Outcomes](#)
25. [Pages](#)
26. [People](#)
27. [Profile and User Settings](#)
28. [Quizzes](#)
29. [New Quizzes](#)
30. [Rich Content Editor](#)
31. [New Rich Content Editor](#)
32. [Rubrics](#)
33. [Settings](#)
34. [SpeedGrader](#)
35. [Web Services](#)

#### Resources Available through Canvas

Visit the DE News page for guides to enable these [great tools!](#)

#### Regular and Substantive Contact

##### *ConferZoom*

If you'd like to schedule one-on-one or group sessions through video-chats, Confer-Zoom allows this. It will also allow you to share your screen and record sessions so that you can share them with the class. This is a good tool to help in sharing answers to frequently asked questions.

##### *Canvas Discussion Board*

Host whole class or small group discussions in your course with options to grade or to just have a meaningful conversation with your students. It reassures student to student contact as well.

### *Canvas Announcements*

Notify your class what is happening. You can enable Announcements in the top of the home page to keep students informed. See the Settings page and scroll down to “Optional Settings” to enable Announcements on the Home page.

### *Making Grading Easier*

#### *Canvas Gradebook*

Instructors teaching traditional classes can make use of the Canvas gradebook as a transparent, FERPA-compliant way for students to see how they’re doing in classes.

#### *Gradescope*

If you’re a math or science teacher or anyone that regularly gives paper-based tests (especially if they rely heavily on notation or sketches that can’t be easily created digitally), Gradescope is a tool that will allow you to scan and upload tests and then apply rubrics to grade them. It even allows you to adjust the rubric mid-grading and will retroactively update all graded tests with the new rubric information. If you teach programming, Gradescope also can be used to detect plagiarism in coding assignments.

#### *Turnitin*

Did you know that Turnitin does more than detect plagiarism? While Turnitin does combine cutting edge tools with curricular resources to deter plagiarism, it also allows you to create rubrics for assignments that can make your feedback process faster, easier, and more consistent. Turnitin’s Teaching Tools library has a library of free downloadable grading rubrics that you can browse. It even allows for voice recording of comments for your students.

### *Student Support Tools*

#### *NetTutor*

NetTutor is a free online tutoring service that is available 24-7 and is fully integrated with Canvas.

#### *StudyMate*

Students learn course materials with fun, interactive activities including flash cards, crosswords, matching, self-quizzes, and more. What sets StudyMate Campus apart from flashcard websites is that it works seamlessly with your LMS. There are no external websites to go to, no registration steps, and no URLs to track. Simply login to your LMS and use StudyMate like a native tool.

## Open Educational Resources Initiative

The Chancellor's Office has made a priority to reduce textbook costs for 70% C-ID courses in the CCC system through the creation and adoption of low cost or no cost online resources integrated into the Learning Management System.

If you would like support in your discipline, visit the [Open Educational Resources Initiative page](#) and navigate through their many Zoom trainings, PowerPoints and tools available today.

You can receive training through [RCCD with FLEX credit approval in your Canvas course](#) or visit the OER [Intro course in the OERI Canvas shell](#).

Either way you will need to use your Canvas login credentials to access the full benefits of these amazing sources of information.

Remember, this is a Statewide drive to help students afford course materials in order to promote their immediate access and increase success.

Thank you for considering this very important Initiative.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How will students access my Canvas class/How do students login to Canvas?

A: Students can access from the Canvas Login link on the Distance Education website. We also provide students with [Canvas login information](#). students are generally uploaded 2 weeks before the course starts and will be able to access on the first day of the class. Otherwise, recently added students are uploaded within 2 hours. Once published, you can use the [Canvas Inbox](#) to message students. Some faculty have used this option to provide the course syllabus to students prior to the class start date. Please keep in mind that even though a class is published students will not be able to access the class until the scheduled start date.

**IMPORTANT!** Don't forget to **Publish your Course!** If you do not publish your class, students will not be able to access or view content on the class start date.

Q: How can I find out if I am using a supported browser for Canvas

A: Be sure to check the [Canvas Browser & System Requirements](#) page.

Q: How can I view my course as a student? Is there a "demo" student available for instructors?

A: Yes. One option is to click [Student View](#) at the far right column on your course home page. Alternately, a "demo" student account can be created for an instructor which allows you to

login to your Canvas classes as if you are a student. Request a demo student account via the [Faculty Assistance Form](#).

Q: How can my students get help?

A: For Students, Canvas support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-844-603-4264. Additionally, students can click the help link (located near the bottom of the initial Canvas login area OR on the navigation bottom left after logging into Canvas) and [selecting Canvas Guides for Students](#).

Q: What is the Distance Education Instructor Resources course I see listed under my course listings?

A: We have included resources for Distance Education faculty within the [Distance Education Instructor Resources](#). This includes information, “how-to” guides and resources on Accessibility, the OEI, Software, best practices, links to District licensed software (such as Respondus, Studymate), and more!

Q: How can I get more assistance, training and support with Distance Education, related Educational Technologies, Canvas and content accessibility?

A: [Find out more about our support staff](#).

For faculty support throughout the District, contact: Vincent Alonzo and Derek Moore, Online Educational Support/Technologies Trainers. If you need Canvas training, help with building your Canvas class, setting up course content, accessibility, Canvas tools and apps, or if there's a problem with how things are working in Canvas, Vincent or Derek are the people to call! Vincent works primarily at MVC and RCC. Derek works primarily at RCC and Norco College.

Vincent Alonzo ([vincent.alonzo@rccd.edu](mailto:vincent.alonzo@rccd.edu))

Distance Education Support Specialist / Educational Technologies Trainer

(951) 571-6935 MVC

(951) 222-8693 CAADO

Derek Moore([derek.moore@rccd.edu](mailto:derek.moore@rccd.edu))

Distance Education Support Specialist / Educational Technologies Trainer

(951) 222-8694 CAADO

(951) 203-4849 cell

DJ Hawkins and Sean Ulbert, Instructional Designers. Sean and DJ will provide expert consultation to faculty in instructional design theory and support for faculty in universal design. DJ works primarily at MVC and RCC while Sean is primarily at RCC and Norco College.

DJ Hawkins ([dj.hawkins@rccd.edu](mailto:dj.hawkins@rccd.edu))



Instructional Designer  
(951) 222-8216 CAADO  
(951) 266-9315 Cell

Sean Ulbert ([sean.ulbert@rccd.edu](mailto:sean.ulbert@rccd.edu))  
Instructional Designer  
(951) 222-8263 CAADO  
(858) 859-0130 Cell

## Student Guide

### Online Student Services

#### [Admissions & Records](#) (951-372-7002)

- WebAdvisor and email help – please send an email to [admissions@norcocollege.edu](mailto:admissions@norcocollege.edu)
- Transcript request – please visit the website to order
- [Forms](#) - most forms can be completed online and submitted through your RCCD student email.

#### [Career Center](#) (951-372-7147)

- Career planning and employment support services are available online at [www.norcocollege.edu/careercenter](http://www.norcocollege.edu/careercenter)
- Career counseling appointments are available through web conference (Zoom) or by phone. To schedule an appointment, please send an e-mail to [careercenter@norcocollege.edu](mailto:careercenter@norcocollege.edu) and include your name, ID number, phone number, and availability.
- Local job postings are available online through NC Connect at [www.norcocollege.edu/nconnect](http://www.norcocollege.edu/nconnect)
- Visit the [Career Center website](#) for additional information.

#### [Counseling & Advising](#) (951-72-7101)

- Scheduling Appointments - Click the link in WebAdvisor or on the Counseling Webpage
- Counseling Appointments- will take place through Zoom SARS
- Student Education Plan – you can find your education plan in EduNav
- Email: [counseling@norcocollege.edu](mailto:counseling@norcocollege.edu)
- Counseling Webpage:  
<https://www.norcocollege.edu/services/counseling/Pages/index.aspx>
- Counseling Online Webpage:  
<https://www.norcocollege.edu/services/counseling/Pages/Online-Counseling.aspx>

#### [Disability Resource Center](#) (951-372-7070)

- For ASL Interpreting, please call 951-547-1178
- For Accommodations please send an email to [drc@norcocollege.edu](mailto:drc@norcocollege.edu) from your RCCD email.

### Dual Enrollment

- For JFK and CAVA, [email for assistance](#).
- For ERHS, JVHS, LSHS, [email for assistance](#).
- For CENTEN, CHS, SHS, [email for assistance](#).

### [EOPS/ CARE \(951-372-7128\)](#) & [CalWORKs \(951-372-7052\)](#)

- Counseling appointments/workshops will be conducted using Zoom online. To schedule an appointment, please email us at [eops@norccollege.edu](mailto:eops@norccollege.edu).
- CalWORKs mid-semester check-in appointments will be completed by phone. Staff will call to schedule your phone appointment.

### [Financial Aid \(Call 951-372-7009\)](#)

- Most Financial Aid tasks (e.g. FAFSA, forms, etc.) can be completed online. Click here to go to the [Financial Aid webpage](#).
- Email us at: [studentfinancialservices@norccollege.edu](mailto:studentfinancialservices@norccollege.edu).

### [Food Pantry \(Located in STEM Center Room 307 and open 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday\)](#)

- Those in need of Food Pantry items can contact Campus Police between the hours of 10am-2pm Monday through Friday at 951-222-8171 to arrange for a pick-up of food items.
- Need Food? There are many local resources that can help.  
<https://californiavolunteers.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/116/2020/03/CA-COVID-FOOD-Resources.pdf>

### [Foster Youth \(951-372-7128\)](#)

- Laptops will be checked out to students as needed. A flyer is available with free local Wi-Fi zones in the area. Counseling appointments available through Zoom online.
- Staff are using the Group Me account for immediate communications/announcements.  
Foster Youth
- Visit the [Phoenix Scholars website](#) for additional information.

### [Library and Learning Resources \(951-372-7019\)](#)

- Library - <http://norccollege.libguides.com/home>
- NetTutor - <https://norccollege.libguides.com/nettutor/>
- LRC - <https://www.norccollege.edu/academicAffairs/tl/lrc/Pages/index.aspx>

## Canvas Student Guide

Hello, students! We wanted to make a simplified reference tool to help you navigate your transition to Canvas. We understand this is possibly a new Learning Management System to you. Please use this tool to address your user experience.

Consult your instructor, Department Chairs or Deans of Instruction for additional support regarding computer access, Internet access or additional resources. We want to support you in this move from a traditional classroom to an online format.

The Canvas [Student Guide](#) provides direction for most of your user experience needs. Canvas LMS recently updated their online tutorial including step-by-step instructions with screen shots to help you navigate and participate in their courses. Some instructors incorporate third party applications. These are not listed in the Canvas LMS guide. Please consult the RCCD Distance Education website for added support.

Thank you!

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## Supporting Documents

### Academic Policy 4105: Distance Education

#### Riverside Community College District Administrative Procedure

##### No. 4105 Academic Affairs AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

**References:** *Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;*

*34 CFR Section 602.17 (U.S. Department of Education Regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended);*

*ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.1*

RCCD Distance Education is the official District entity responsible for distance education, including technology infrastructure, faculty technology training, reporting and regulatory compliance.

**Definition:** Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology.

**Course Approval:** Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate curriculum committee approval is mandatory if any portion of the instruction in a course or a section of a course 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 outlined in Administrative Procedure 4020 titled Program, Curriculum and Course Development. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

**Certification:** When approving distance education courses, the Vice Chancellor, Educational Services, or designee, will certify the following:

- **Course Quality Standards:** 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 were made with the full involvement of the curriculum committee approval procedures.
- **Instructor Contact:** Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education will include regular effective contact between instructor and students. The manner in which traditional class (seat) time will be effectively replaced in a distance

education format has been addressed.

- Course compliance with Section 508 to ensure the electronic and information technology accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities has been addressed.

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

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education courses is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

The Chief Instructional Officer shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

- secure credentialing/login and password;
- proctored examinations (determined by department); or
- anti-plagiarism software program

The Chief Instructional Officer shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any, to each student at the time of registration.

Office of Primary Responsibility: Vice Chancellor, Educational Services

Administrative Approval: June 15, 2009

Revised: July 30, 2012

Revised: June 16, 2015 (References and Titles only)

Summary of Regulations for Distance Education

**RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

**Summary of Regulations For Distance Education**

**Code of Federal Regulations – Title 34: Education #602.3 Also adopted by the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), see ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education, edited June 2012**

***Definition of Correspondence Education***

**Correspondence Education (CE) means:**

1. Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor;
2. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student;
3. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced; and,
4. Correspondence education is not distance education.

**Definition of Distance Education (DE):**

Distance Education means:

Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may 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. Audioconferencing; or
4. Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMS, if the cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMS are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3)  
(ACCJC 2012 Policy, p.1)

**2. California Regulations:**

California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (amended 2019) and Chancellor’s Office of the California Community Colleges, Distance Education Guidelines (2008)

Title 5 §55200. Definition and Application.

Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by

time and/or distance and interact through the assistance of technology. All distance education is subject to the general requirements of this chapter as well as the specific requirements of this article. In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794d).

*CCCCO Guideline for Section § 55200.*

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.C. 12100 et seq.), section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794d), and California 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.

Title 5 §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.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Section 70901, Education Code.

*CCCCO Guideline for Section § 55202.*

This section emphasizes the extent to which course quality depends upon the full involvement of faculty in the design and application of DE courses. It discusses course quality standards for distance education and combines language formerly found in sections 55207 and 55209 that it replaces. Language is added to clarify that normal course quality standards apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.

Title 5 §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 effective contact between instructor and students, and among students, 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. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.
- (b) Any portion of a course provided through distance education is conducted consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

*CCCCO Guideline for Section § 55204.*

This section defines what contact must be maintained between instructor and student. It is virtually identical to section 55211 that it replaces, except that language has been added to clarify that rules related to conduct of distance education and effective instructor contact apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.

Subdivision (a) stresses the responsibility of the instructor in a DE course to initiate regular contact with enrolled students to verify their participation and performance status. The use of the term “regular effective contact” in this context suggests that students should have frequent opportunities to ask questions and receive answers from the instructor of record.

The last published *Distance Education Guidelines*, March 2004, issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the *Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors*, as referenced in subdivision (b), establishes the principle that for DE courses there are a number of acceptable interactions between instructor and student, not all of which may require in-person contact. Thus, districts and/or colleges will need to define “effective contact” including how often, and in what manner instructor-student interaction is achieved. It is important to document regular effective contact and how it is achieved. Since regular effective contact was declared an academic and professional matter, this documentation must include demonstration of collegial consultation with the academic senate, for example through its delegation to the local curriculum committee. A natural place for this to occur is during the separate course approval process (see section 55206) as well as during faculty evaluations, student surveys, and program review. Documentation should consist of the inclusion of information in applicable



outlines of record on the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session. Local policies should establish and monitor minimum standards of regular effective contact.

Title 5 §55206. *Separate Course Approval.*

If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, an addendum to the official course outline of record shall be required. In addition to addressing how course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode, the addendum shall at a minimum specify how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets:

- (a) Regular and effective contact between instructors and students and among students as referenced in title 5, section 55204(a), and
- (b) Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. § 749d) The addendum shall be separately approved according to the district's adopted curriculum approval procedures.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

*CCCCO Guideline for Section 55206*

This section has been revised to clarify that separate approval of a DE course is required if any portion of the instruction in a course or course section is designed to be regularly provided through distance education in lieu of face-to-face interaction. While only those courses that are 51% or more DE are reported as DE, the language here is intended to clarify that those courses that are less than 51% DE, but are designed to include a certain number of contact hours offered through DE, still must undergo a separate approval process. The occasional online assignment does not necessitate separate approval. In making use of the existing local curriculum approval process, there must be documentation of "regular effective contact" as described in section 55204 consistent with local policy. For this reason, a course with any portion of a course section provided through DE in lieu of face-to-face instruction should be separately reviewed.

Title 5 §55208. *Faculty Selection and Workload.*

- (a) Instructors of course sections delivered via distance education technology shall be selected by the same procedures used to determine all instructional assignments. Instructors shall possess the minimum qualifications for the \h] section 53410) of subchapter 4 of chapter 4, and with the list of discipline definitions and requirements adopted by the Board of Governors to implement that article, as such list may be amended from time to time.

- (b) Instructors of distance education shall be prepared to teach in a distance education delivery method consistent with local district policies and negotiated agreements.
- (c) The number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance education shall be determined by and be consistent with other district procedures related to faculty assignment. Procedures for determining the number of students assigned to a course section offered in whole or in part by distance education may include a review by the curriculum committee established pursuant to section 55002(a)(1).
- (d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impinge upon or detract from any negotiations or negotiated agreements between exclusive representatives and district governing boards.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

*CCCCO Guidelines for 55208*

This section emphasizes that faculty delivering DE courses should meet the same minimum qualifications and be selected in the same manner as faculty teaching non-DE courses.

Title 5 §55210. Ongoing Responsibility of Districts.

If a district offers one or more courses or course sections in which instruction is provided through distance education for at least 51 percent of the hours of instruction in the course or course section, the district shall:

- (a) Maintain records and report data through the Chancellor's Office Management Information System on the number of students and faculty participating in new courses or sections of established courses offered through distance education;
- (b) Provide to the local governing board, no later than August 31st of each year, a report on all distance education activity;
- (c) Provide other information consistent with reporting guidelines developed by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

*CCCCO Guidelines for 55210*

Districts offering DE courses, where 51% or more of the instruction in a course are offered using DE, are required regularly to report all management information system (MIS) elements to the Chancellor's Office Management Information System Division. To fulfill this MIS reporting requirement, districts will need to

ensure that data now regularly reported on each session's method of instruction within data element XFO1: "Session Instruction Method" are reliably differentiated between DE and non-DE.

This section also requires districts to report annually all DE activity to their local governing board and respond to any Chancellor's Office request for data on DE which includes the Annual Institutional Survey and the DE Faculty and Student Satisfaction Surveys. To the extent possible, local reports should compare and contrast DE to traditional instructional delivery. The Chancellor's Office will continue electronically to provide all surveys and information regarding timelines, formats, and the reporting instrument annually for the Institutional, Faculty and Student Satisfaction surveys. The results of the annual surveys will be available on the Chancellor's Office (CO) website. The surveys consist of questions relevant to distance education courses/programs offered at CCC campuses. Based on input from the technical advisory committee referenced in the Board of Governors Standing Order 409, the Chancellor may require districts to provide additional information.

#### Distance Education and Correspondence Education

From the ACCJC Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies (pp. 5 – 6)

##### *Evaluation Items:*

- The institution has policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions.
- There is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student's grade) or correspondence education (online activities are primarily "paperwork related," including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing examinations, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).
- The institution has appropriate means and consistently applies those means for verifying the identity of a student who participates in a distance education or correspondence education course or program, and for ensuring that student information is protected.
- The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings.
- The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*.

### *Policy*

Commission policy specifies that all learning opportunities provided by accredited institutions must have equivalent quality, accountability, and focus on student outcomes, regardless of mode of delivery. This policy provides a framework that allows institutions the flexibility to adapt their delivery modes to the emerging needs of students and society while maintaining quality. Any institution offering courses and programs through distance education or correspondence education is expected to meet the requirements of accreditation in each of its courses and programs and at each of its sites.

### *Policy Elements*

- Development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs, including those offered via distance education or correspondence education, must take place within the institution's total educational mission.
- Institutions are expected to control development, implementation, and evaluation of all courses and programs offered in their names, including those offered via distance education or correspondence education.
- Institutions are expected to have clearly defined and appropriate student learning outcomes for all courses and programs, including those delivered through distance education or correspondence education.
- Institutions are expected to provide the resources and structure needed to accomplish these outcomes and to demonstrate that their students achieve these outcomes through application of appropriate assessment.
- Institutions are expected to provide the Commission advance notice of intent to initiate a new delivery mode, such as distance education or correspondence education, through the substantive change process.
- Institutions are expected to provide the Commission advance notice if intent to offer a program, degree or certificate in which 50% or more of the courses are via distance education or correspondence education, through the substantive change process. For purposes of this requirement, the institution is responsible for calculating the percentage of courses that may be offered through distance or correspondence education.
- Institutions which offer distance education or correspondence education must have processes in place through which the institution establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence course or program is the same person who participates every time in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. This requirement will be met if the institution verifies the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the institution's discretion, such methods as a secure log-in and password, proctored examinations, other technologies and/or practices that are developed and effective in verifying each student's identification. The institution must also publish policies that ensure the protection of student privacy and will notify students at the time of class registration of any charges associated with verification of student identity. 34 C.F.R. §602.17(G).

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Institutional Self Evaluation Report (See page 65)

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.

Standards for student learning in distance education courses are the same as those in face-to-face classes (CR19). Review and approval of new and existing distance education courses follows the curriculum approval procedures outlined in AP 4020: Program, Curriculum, and Course Development (CR20). The College follows the policies and procedures for classifying courses as distance education following AP 4105: Distance Education (CR21) (with a revision in process in 2019), which aligns to USDE definitions, and as described in the RCCD Curriculum Handbook (CR22). Links available on the College's Distance Education Committee webpage (CR23) and at the District's Distance Education page for faculty (CR24) provide further detail. AP 4105 also identifies distance education course approval and certification processes, which are detailed in the Curriculum Handbook (CR25). The College does not offer correspondence education courses.

RCCD faculty who elect to teach distance education courses are required to indicate they have read two documents addressing student contact: RCCD Guide to Recommended Best Practices to Achieve Regular and Effective/Substantive Contact in Distance Education (CR26) and the Summary of Regulations for Regular and Substantive Contact (CR27), with current documents linked on the college Distance Education Committee webpage (CR28) as well as the District's Distance Education/Faculty webpage (CR29).

In order to best serve students, during 2018, RCCD transitioned to the Canvas learning management system from Blackboard. As of January 2019, all distance education classes in the District are taught using Canvas. As required by AP 4105, the College has appropriate means and consistently applies those means to verify the identity of a student who participates in a distance education course. All courses are hosted through Instructure, an educational technology company and developer of Canvas, and are administered through secure login, with information between the browser and website encrypted. In addition to this, there is password protection for each individual user account. Many faculty also use Turnitin.com anti-plagiarism software, which the District makes available to instructors.

The College ensures that the technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education offerings through participation in the California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative (OEI). Instructure is responsible for the hosting and uptime of the entire OEI and participating colleges using Canvas. Other than Canvas, colleges in the District rely on Information Technology (IT) infrastructure that houses student and faculty data and, as described in the District's Strategic Technology Plan, maintains a secure environment for District's technology equipment and information (CR30).

## RCCD Guide to Recommended Best Practices to Achieve Regular and Substantive Contact in Distance Education

November 4, 2019

### Introduction

Regular and substantive contact, as described in the accompanying Summary of Regulations document, is required as outlined in those regulations for in all course sections taught using Distance Education (DE) within the Riverside Community College District, that is, any course section where “seat time” is replaced by other forms of contact with students, including completely online and hybrid course sections. The tools described below represent examples of practices compiled by DE faculty at all three colleges that achieve regular and substantive contact. Faculty are encouraged to share with each other new best practices as they develop in the future from available technologies.

RCCD recommends that DE instructors use the ideas contained here, or others that are

similar, to initiate and sustain contact with students, being mindful that all course materials must be ADA, section 508, compliant and pre-certified by the district through the curriculum approval process as being accessible to all students, including closed-captioning on video content, where appropriate, and other compliance requirements.

This best practice document was developed through collaboration with the College Distance Education Committees, the District Curriculum Committee, the College Curriculum Committees, administrators, and Distance Education personnel.

The responsibility for constructing, maintaining and updating this list of best practices resides with the colleges’ Distance Education Committees and College Curriculum Committees, which report to the colleges’ Academic Senates. These committees will review this document regularly and make recommendations to the Academic Senate as significant changes are required. The Colleges’ Curriculum Committees are also responsible for assuring the public that the “same standards of course quality [are] applied to any portion of a course conducted through distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses...” from Title 5 §55202.

Just a reminder: **“Correspondence Education is not Distance Education.”**

In Correspondence Education, the institution provides instructional materials by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials to students who are separated from the instructor, and the following conditions also exist: (1) Interaction between the instructor and the students is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. (2) The course is self-paced.

## RCCD Guide to Recommended Best Practices in Distance Education (DE)

### Definitions of Terms

**Definition: Instructor-Initiated Interactions:** Unlike correspondence education, in which students are responsible for initiating contact with the instructor, instructors using DE are required to actively initiate interaction with their students as a group and individually.

**Definition: Frequent and Timely, i.e., Regular Contact/Interactions:** The measure of “regular contact” is based on a standard that is at least the same as it would be in a traditional face-to-face class. Instructors may exceed this minimum at their discretion. The number of asynchronous or synchronous hours that an instructor is available to students enrolled in a DE class must be at least equal to the number of hours of availability as required for face-to-face classes of the same courses. Instructor contact with DE students is understood as distributed over the course of the “instructional week” (seven days) and the term of the course (expressed in weeks). Instructor-initiated contact will occur as often as appropriate for regular contact, as defined by regulation.

**Definition: Substantive Contact/Interactions:** Substantive contact with students and delivery of course content includes instructor interaction with the entire group of students in the course section based on a well-defined schedule of availability, deadlines, feedback, and exchanges that are included in the instructor’s Syllabus. Instructors define their schedules in the Syllabus and in other appropriate locations within the course management system.

Course sections taught using DE are considered the virtual equivalent of face-to-face classes, although many online or hybrid course sections may exceed the minimum requirements of the Course Outline of Record (COR) with effective use of current technologies inherent in the mode of delivery. Based on the notion that “a student cannot hide in the back of the room” in an online or hybrid class, substantive contact between students and the instructor is, in many cases, more likely in an online class than in a traditional lecture room.

### *Examples of Recommended Best Practices for Achieving Regular Contact (Interaction) for Distance Education Course Sections*

Means of achieving “regular” contact include, but are not limited to:

- Faculty presence, guidance, and initiation of contact.
- The flow, sequence, and deadlines of the course are directed by the instructor and the timing of the course set through use of learning activities, online discussion, and/or lectures.
- Interaction with students happens fairly frequently and students grow to expect it.
- Announcements in Canvas at strategic points in the course by the instructor concerning course assignments and additional guidance
- Notice to students of instructor absence from class and information on when regular

interaction will resume.

- Assignments and assessment deadlines are spread throughout the term of the class.

In Case of Interrupted, Regular Contact: Interruptions in instructor contact as defined by the instructor's Syllabus (such as illness or an emergency that takes the instructor offline) require notification to students via class announcement, email, and/or Discussion Board, or another course tool, stating the duration of the interruption. In the event that "regular" contact cannot be resumed according to the definitions of regular contact on the Syllabus, the Dean of Instruction should be notified.

*Examples of Recommended Best Practices for Achieving Substantive Contact (Interaction) in Distance Education Course Sections*

Faculty teaching in the online environment should be using varied ways of interacting with their students.

Embracing the tenets of universal design as an approach to ensure that educational programs serve all students, RCCD's Guide to Best Practices in Distance Education Course Design considers a wide range of strategies to provide an inclusive environment for all students regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, and disability status. To this end, instructors will use more than one method to maintain substantive contact with students and will outline their methods of choice in their syllabus.

Means of achieving "substantive contact" include, but are not limited to:

- Follow-up questions on a discussion board to assist students in reaching a higher learning potential.
- Timely, personalized feedback on assignments, discussions and/or quizzes (through comments in the Canvas gradebook, on discussion forum rubrics, or in Turnitin comments), that guide students to further knowledge and skills.
- Feedback on student assignments should identify specifically what has been done correctly, needs improvement, or guides students to the next steps of learning. Brief comments like "good job" or "you need to improve" are not substantive, nor are generic rubric categories without additional comments.
- Course materials (ex. recorded webinars, videos, and reading materials) which facilitate synchronous or asynchronous interactions and require the student to contact the instructor or participate in an online discussion moderated by the instructor.
- Instructor announcements to the class regarding course content and upcoming assignments.
- Synchronous online meetings and chats that further explore course material and answer student questions.



*Other Suggested Options for Communications with Students*

**Synchronous Interaction:** By utilizing available technologies, such as ConferZoom, DE instructors can maximize face-to-face, synchronous interaction with students, if needed, to achieve the objectives of the course. ConferZoom is a web conferencing tool that is free to the California Community College System and is integrated into Canvas shells in RCCD.

*Examples of vital or essential Standards of Regular, Effective/Substantive Contact within a Course (these are all suggestion for the type of information that make expectations clear):*

**Regular Contact:**

- Example of an announcement/syllabus item indicating an estimated time for response to student emails: “Your instructor will respond to emails within 48 hours. Emails received after noon on Friday will not be responded to until Monday morning”
- Example of a feedback expectation statement: “Assignments are due on Sunday night at 10 pm. Your instructor will begin grading them on Monday and all grades will be posted by Wednesday evening”
- Example of a discussion board post expectation: “Your instructor will respond to discussion board questions within 48 hours. Questions posted after Friday at 12 pm will not be responded to until Monday morning.”

**Substantive Contact:**

- Example of a discussion board statement to correct an error of fact or comprehension: “The point you made in the last discussion post was accurate, but the dates of the conflict were slightly later, perhaps around 1776. Check out earlier posts of the first group that give a good sense of the issues surrounding the conflict and the time period required or completion of the war.”



**Norco Academic Senate**

**Norco College Distance Education Committee**

**April 2020**