

# Faculty Distance Education Course Checklist

*This resource is intended for use by faculty and peer reviewers of distance and hybrid courses. Standards for quality distance education courses are defined in the [Distance Education Faculty Handbook](#) and aligned with [CCFT Contract 11.2.2.1, Distance Education](#).*

## OVERVIEW

The course evaluation process is one opportunity for faculty teaching distance and hybrid courses to align their courses with current DE quality standards. The nature of regulatory requirements for DE courses means faculty currently teaching online may be subject to peer review visits to verify evidence of regular and substantive interaction with students. The following checklist is provided to assess course compliance with these standards.

### Evaluation Standards for Online and Hybrid Courses

#### *Category 1: Design/Presentation*

This section address how content is organized and accessed in the course management system.

- Course navigation is easily determined by the user
- Course content is organized in a logical format and includes demonstrable learning outcomes.
- Syllabus or orientation/welcome letter provides course guidance to streamline access to learning materials.
- Course is visually and functionally consistent; content organized into units or modules.
- Pages are designed to be readable.
- Language of written material is friendly and supportive, and policies and student services resources are included and easy to find.

#### *Category 2: Communication/Interaction*

Effective communication provides multiple opportunities for student interaction, response and collaboration. Effective student/teacher contact is required by Title 5. Course uses a variety of media to communicate course materials (for example, text, graphics, audio, video, etc.).

- The instructor provides students with his/her plan to engage in regular effective contact using Canvas communication tools that includes expected time frames for responses to inquiries, discussion board posts, and feedback on assignments and assessments.
- Course technology is explained to students, and links to technology support are provided.
- There are opportunities for student-to-student interaction that reinforces learning outcomes and builds community.
- Guidelines for required levels of participation included and netiquette expectations are clearly stated.

### *Category 3: Instructional Methods and Assessment*

The instructor uses a variety of instructional methods and assessment to accommodate different learning styles.

- Rubrics for desired outcomes are included.
- Student learning outcomes are clearly identified; course objectives and completion requirements are present. Expectation of student's participation, honesty, etc. is clear.
- Assignments and grading standards are clearly stated. (Examples may include sample assignments, clear directions, criteria used to evaluate discussion board participation or peer review.)
- Feedback is provided throughout the course: self-tests written feedback, discussion board, email, etc.
- Student knowledge, attitudes, and/or skills are assessed in multiple ways.

### *Category 4: Usability and Accessibility*

This section includes standards referenced in Section 508 (Federal Law) for web accessibility and the evaluator will be provided additional guidelines.

- Course provides instructor contact information.
- Course content, including uploaded files, complies with Section 508 standards for accessibility. ([See Section D of OEI Course Design Rubric](#))
- Course provides access to plug-ins or other applications supporting course content.

### *CCFT Contract*

#### 11.2.2.15 Distance Education

11.2.2.15.1 Prior to their initial distance course assignment at Cabrillo, faculty are required to participate in an orientation organized by the distance Education Coordinator.

11.2.2.15.3 Regular Effective Contact with Students: The definition of regular effective contact includes regular and substantive student interaction with the instructor that is initiated by the instructor, and is included in the grade. Activities may include group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, online correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to Title 5, Section 53200.

Content adopted from spring 2008 Academic Senate Paper “Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Educational Technology: An Update for Local Academic Senates” and the spring 2005 Academic Senate Rostrum, “Observing Online Classes.”

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