Distance Education
Faculty Handbook
Santa Ana College
Revision Date November 2015

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

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

Preparation to Teaching Online

1. SAC Definitions and Terminology:

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

Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval using the Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the SAC Regular Effective Contact Policy. **Proctored exam dates and meeting dates must be stated in comments section of WebAdvisor when students register.**

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

Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval with Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the SAC Regular Effective Contact Policy. **Class meeting dates must be stated and scheduled on WebAdvisor when students register.**

2. Curriculum Approval:
All courses that use distance education as a modality for instruction in lieu of face-to-face instruction must go through the curriculum approval process by completing a DE Addendum and have it approved by the curriculum committee. (Appendix A)

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

3. Training and Support:
Academic Senate has adopted the following faculty readiness criteria for faculty members prior to teaching online/hybrid courses:

Before an instructor is assigned to teach a distance education class for the first time they must complete training in the following areas:

- Course Management System (Bb) training
- New Technologies Training
- Online Teaching and Pedagogy
- Effective and Engaging Techniques
- Assessment Methods
- Capstone – Online Course Creation & Review (optional for blended courses)

Examples of satisfactory training include completion of one of the following:
- Santa Ana College's Online Instruction Certification
- Completion of the California Community College @One Online Teaching Certification (*http://www.onefortraining.org/certification/*) within the last three years.

Blackboard training is offered during flexweek and online.

Distance Education departmental team support is always available to faculty and students. Utilize departmental services through:
- DE website: http://sac.edu/disted
- Blackboard Instructor course, containing handouts and video assistance (Logon to Blackboard (http://rsccd.blackboard.com) and click on the "Faculty Information site" course)
- Contacting the office directly:
  - Cesar Chavez building: A-101
  - (714) 564-6725 or email: sac_disted@sac.edu

Designing a Course

1. Effective Practices

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

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

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

2. Policies and Checklist for Course Design
Policies, checklists and resources are available in the Blackboard **Faculty Information site**. Access is through our district site: http://rsccd.blackboard.com using your WebAdvisor id and password.

3. Compliance

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

There are a few different tools that can be used for video captioning. It is best to contact the Distance Education Office regarding captioning of existing videos or creation of your own videos. We work in conjunction with Educational Multimedia Services and Disabled Student Program & Services (DSPS) to assist in transcription and captioning. For more information regarding alternate media visit the High Tech Center Training Unit website.

Blackboard is fully accessible. However, if you have a visually impaired student in your course, it would be a good idea to notify the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) department and request that they review your course. The DE Office works with DSPS for course access. (DSPS (714) 564-6264, U-103)

Authentication
Public Law 110-315: Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008), Section 495

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

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

Santa Ana College complies with the authentication regulation through:

- Secure Login: Students logging into our Course Management System, Blackboard, are verified through the district LDAP server which authenticates the student and allows Bb access if the credentials are successful. A secured verification through a unique, secure login with the student's current WebAdvisor ID/password is used for Blackboard course access.

- In course verification techniques such as:

    o Assessment proctoring (instructor or test center led with photo-ID verification (Online Test Proctoring Form ", which can also be found at our website (Appendix F)

    o Best practices that utilize:

        ✓ Integrated Turnitin or SafeAssign for originality checks

- ✓ Multiple measures of assessing student achievement
    - ▪ Assessments developed using techniques discouraging plagiarism and encouraging originality
    - ▪ Monitoring by faculty of the student-voice in their active engagement contact, via course tools, such as: discussion board, blogs, and wikis

Academic Integrity

It is a requirement for SAC faculty to define cheating and plagiarism in their course documentation and syllabus. Faculty should have a link to the technology acceptable use policy and student conduct policy. Very often community college students do not understand what plagiarism means. A recommended method would be to hold a discussion forum asking students to write what it means to plagiarize. It should be made clear in the course content that the topic should be course specific. The following link would serve as a good example: Rutgers – Interactive Plagiarism Video, Real Life Examples, and Quiz and What is Plagiarism?

Faculty can assist students in their online class preparation, which will help to improve online course retention rates. SAC offers a Student Online Orientation that SAC students can take at any time. Have your student logon to Blackboard and take the "SAC Student Online Orientation":
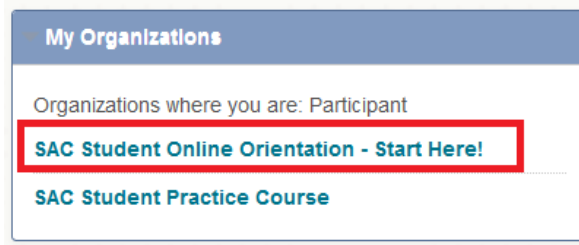
Regular Effective Contact

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

Copyright

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

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

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

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

Unit of Credit

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

Last Date of Attendance

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

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

State Authorization
Federal Regulation Chapter 34, § 600.9(c)

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

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

Student Information:
- A webpage with information regarding the regulation and complaint resolution by state is available on the Distance Education website.
- A statement regarding Santa Ana College Out of State regulations is stated at the beginning of the Santa Ana College Application.

Important Policies

1. Student Online Readiness

What you can REQUIRE of your students:
Faculty can require students in their online course to prepare for online learning, using the SAC "Student Online Orientation" and the "Bb Basics for Students: Technical Training Workshop", both of which are available for all students to take at any time on Blackboard. Instruct your students logon to Blackboard and take the "SAC Student Online Orientation", under "My Organizations":
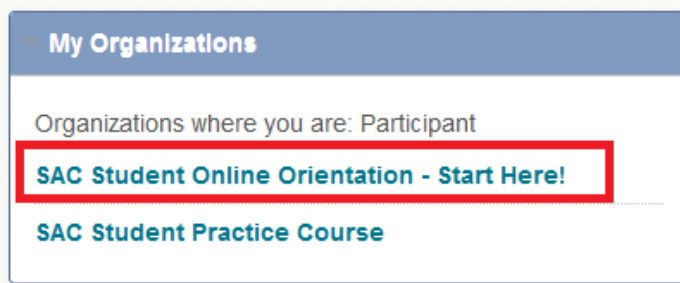
In a total time of approximately one hour, students will:
- Understand **Blackboard navigation**
- Determine their learning style and study tips for their particular style
- Determine if they have the **technical and study skills required** for online learning
- Master **Netiquette** (online etiquette) for course participation
- Understand the **SAC Academic Honesty Policy**
- Obtain **time management tips and information on the number of hours required** for their online course
- **Learn and Practice a discussion board post and assignment submittal**

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

Bb Basics for Students: Technical Training Workshop

Similarly, under "My Courses", all students are enrolled in "Bb Basics for Students". It is a self-paced Bb course in which students will learn how to:
- Navigate through Blackboard
- Update personal information (image)
- Use Blackboard tools
- Submit assignments
- Take a test or quiz
- View grades and instructor feedback
- Access Blackboard support, help and student resources

DE faculty are encouraged to require the SAC Student Online Orientation and Bb Basics training as a pre-course or first week activity.

What you can PROVIDE for your students:

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

1. **Welcome Email**

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

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

2. **Clarity and Organization**

   There are a few easy methods that can be used to assure clarity for your students:
   - Use of **Announcements with email**, check to email – used as a weekly reminder of tasks to do for the course is helpful to students
   - **Calendar due dates** in your Bb course calendar – use due dates in your course and make a calendar menu item for students to easily access
   - Bb **Menu customization** for your course
   - **Rubrics** – integrated into all areas in Bb
   - **Discussion board Question forum**
   - **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) -** Consider putting together a list of FAQs and posting it as a working document that you can add to as needed

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

2. Course Shells

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

3. Check-in and Course Availability

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

Faculty can follow this with an email to the students on the waitlist, in waitlist order, to let them know that they may be added if they email the faculty member by the end of the first week of classes (faculty can set the time). Faculty emails the add code to the student on the waitlist using the student's WebAdvisor email. Once the student is added into WebAdvisor, it takes a ½ day at most, for a student who is added to the system to be enrolled in the Bb course. The add job from WebAdvisor to Bb is run twice a day at approximately 10am and 3pm.

4. Syllabus/Start-up Requirements

All faculty members must provide students with a course syllabus specific to the course. The syllabus is a contract with the students in the class. A clear and detailed syllabus will lead to fewer misunderstandings. Instructors often include detailed descriptions of assignments and rubrics for evaluation. A course syllabus is required and available to students the first day of class.
Faculty must submit a copy of their respective course syllabi to their division office.
Recommended Online Course Outline Additions can be found at our DE Website (Appendix D)

5. Dropping Students

Per Title 5, Section 58004:

> Districts shall, according to procedures adopted by the Governing board, clear the rolls of inactive enrollment. Inactive enrollment in a course is defined as follows:
> As of each census day, any student who has:
> (1) Been identified as a **no-show** , or
> (2) **Officially withdrawn** from the course, or
> (3) Been dropped from the course. A student shall be dropped **if no longer participating** in the course, except if there are extenuating circumstances. "No longer participating" includes, but is not limited to, excessive unexcused absences but **must relate to nonattendance**. "Extenuating circumstances" are verified cases of accidents, illness, other circumstances beyond the control of the student, and other conditions defined by the governing board and published in regulations. The "drop date" shall be the end of business of the day immediately preceding the census day.

Your drop policy must be stated in your course syllabus.
Example:
In this course:
1. Students must attend one of the mandatory introductory sessions offered during the first week of classes or they will be dropped for non-attendance.

2. Students must complete the "Orientation Exercises" and participate in Week #1's discussion board by Monday of the second week of classes or they will be dropped.
3. Students must participate on the course site with discussion board posts, online quiz submissions, project submissions or other online interactions for that week (blogs, wikis, chat). If two consecutive weeks of non-participation is observed by the instructor, the student may be dropped.

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

DO NOT ALLOW STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PARTICIPATING TO REMAIN IN CLASS.

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

Directions on how to make your course unavailable to a particular student on Bb is located in the FAQs for Faculty and in the Beginning-of-Semester Checklist. Here is a quick video on making a course unavailable to a student and hiding them in the grade center.

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

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

SAC Orientations
1. SAC Student Online Orientation can be taken at any time. (See "1. Student Online Readiness") DE faculty are encouraged to require the SAC Student Online Orientation as a pre-course or first week activity.
2. SAC Bb Basics for Students can be taken at any time. (See "1. Student Online Readiness")
3. Instructors can provide students with linked web resources, located at the SAC Distance Education website (http://sac.edu/disted).

7. Instructor Initiated Regular Effective Contact

It is extremely important that all Distance Education instructors adhere to the approved SAC Regular Effective Contact Policy developed to follow Title V and the California Community College Chancellor's Office requirements.

All DE courses at SAC, whether hybrid or online will include regular effective contact as described below:

- **Initiated interaction**: Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. Providing students with an open-ended question forum, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor initiated interaction.
  - **Examples**
    - ➢ Use of the Discussion board or blog for a check-in or icebreaker activity, where students will be expected to share and comment on each other's blog or post.
    - ➢ Use of the Discussion board for weekly topics for sharing and commenting.
    - ➢ Use of the Discussion board for an open question/comment forum, allowing for instructor and student responses.
    - ➢ Use of the Blog for current event posting and comments.
    - ➢ Creating a course orientation video for students to familiarize them with the course site.
    - ➢ Creating lecture/topic videos to allow for various learning modalities.

- **Frequency**: DE Courses are considered the "virtual equivalent" to on-campus courses. Therefore, the frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, on-campus course.

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

8. Visitation Protocols for Online Courses

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

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

9. Office Hours

Five (5) office hours per week shall be posted and maintained in the faculty members' office in accordance with the needs and convenience of the students and community members. Faculty who teach online courses shall have their office hours reduced by the ratio of 1 hour per 3 LHE of online courses taught.

10. Dealing with Disruptive Students Online

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

The document titled "Dealing with Disruptive Students" identifies some of the behaviors that faculty might encounter, gives suggestions for handling disruptive students, then outlines the official CLPCCD procedure for removing students.

11. Email and Contact Archiving

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

12. Download a Gradebook

At the end of the semester, final grades are submitted through WebAdvisor. Faculty will also need to provide Admissions and Records with their supporting documents. You can download your Blackboard grade center into an Excel spreadsheet that can be sent to the designated Admissions personnel. View instructions for downloading the course grade center.

13. Student Services for Online Students

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

14. Technical Support

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