



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

No. 4105.1

MENDOCINO - LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

DISTANCE EDUCATION, STUDENT AUTHENTICATION PROCESS, AND REGULAR AND EFFECTIVE CONTACT

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

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 the following methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

- proctored examinations; or
- secure credentialing/login and password;
- new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

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.

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

The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in Administrative Procedures 4020.1, Program and Curriculum Development. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

Addendum to Course Outline: An addendum to the official course outline of record shall be made if any portion of the instruction of a new or existing course is provided through distance education. The addendum must be approved according to the District's curriculum approval procedures. The addendum must address the following:

- How course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode;

- How the portion of instruction delivered via distance education provides regular and effective contact between instructors and students; and
- How the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

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

Certification: When approving distance education courses, the Curriculum Committee 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 Distance Education 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.

Frequency of Interaction and Student Contact:

Instructors shall regularly communicate with the class as a whole through announcements, open-ended question forums, etc. These communications will take place at least weekly.

Instructors shall regularly initiate interaction with individual students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. These interactions should include responses in open forums, feedback on assignments, etc., and should take place at least weekly. Response time to student questions shall be no more than 72 hours in most situations.

Should the instructor be out of contact for longer than 72 hours, notification to students shall be made in the announcements area of the course. This notice will include a date when the students can expect regular effective contact to resume.

Type of Initiated Interaction and Student Contact:

Mendocino College Distance Education courses shall use the following methods of communication to initiate contact with students:

- Announcements in the Course Management System
- Discussion forums with appropriate instructor participation
- Timely response to student emails or inquiries
- Timely feedback for student work

Instructors may also choose other optional forms of communication, synchronous or asynchronous, including but not limited to:

- Instructor prepared e-lectures or introductions to any publisher created materials
- Group or individual meetings, including review and study sessions
- Telephone conversations
- ConferZoom
- Podcasts

Student to Student Interaction should be built into the online course environment. This interaction may be synchronous or asynchronous:

- Regular interactions discussing course content
- Student “hang out” space in a discussion forum or other equivalent space
- Collaborative course work or projects

References: Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;
34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 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