2013
Distance Learning Guidelines, Policies and Procedures Manual
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WHAT IS DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNING?

The 2009 Higher Education Opportunities Act (HEOA) recently separated distance education from correspondence education by defining each:

DEFINITION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

"Distance education is defined, for the purpose of accreditation review as a formal interaction which uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and which supports regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. Distance education often incorporates technologies such as the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, in conjunction with any of the other technologies.

WHAT IS PEDAGOGY?

It is the process of being a teacher and can be referred to as the correct use of instructive strategies. The instructor’s own beliefs are harbored by the student’s background knowledge and experience, situation, and environment.
SUCCESSFUL ONLINE TEACHING

1. Be open-minded about communicating with students and faculty
2. Communicate with colleagues for concerns, questions, assistance, etc.
3. Participate in meetings, orientations and trainings through various interactive mediums
4. Meet minimum requirements for the program, but strive to do more
5. Accept constructive feedback from students and peers
6. Understand that the lack of face-to-face instruction does not lessen the quality of education
7. Understand that the same amount of work is required Online as in the classroom
8. Stay current with subject matter and technology
DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

- Online classes must be taught online exclusively. Online courses at LASC will be provided in an asynchronous-paced mode, using the Internet.
  - Face-to-face orientation must be optional for students
  - Orientation mandatory for faculty, and highly encouraged for students
    - Orientation material posted online
    - Orientation can be done via web-conferencing
    - Conducted face-to-face

- All faculty must use the LMS Platform designated by LASC for online instruction

- All online classes must use multi-media features, beyond text, such as images, videos, animation, slides, and auditory and any other visually creative tool.

- Clear directions, rubric, and any other guidelines to assist students’ needs should be presented in a consistent manner.

- For example, using a rubric for clear grading guidelines.

Assignments must specifically be designed to enhance learning through discussions, web-conferencing, online chat, team projects, forums or any other tool to engage the student.

- Course outline must meet Student Learning Outcomes (SLO).

- Online content developed must meet course objectives defined by course outline, SLOs, PLOs.

The courses offered Online will adhere to the same course outline requirements as traditional classrooms, including regularly faculty and student attendance and online participation.
SYLLABUS/HOME PAGE REQUIREMENTS

1. Every course must have the District-wide plagiarism policy placed on home page
2. Every course must have the District-wide policy for students with disabilities, with the telephone and access information to make accommodation for the students
3. Syllabus must contain Student Learning Outcomes
4. Post active link to the LASC’s Student Conduct Policy within the syllabus
5. Every course must have posted information dealing with technical issues. This must also be placed in the syllabus.
6. Tutorial videos/links must be placed on the home page and referenced in the syllabus
7. Instructor’s contact information and virtual office hours
8. Course/verbiage and section number and course description
9. Instructor’s expectations for student success in the class
10. Grading policy
11. Attendance/participation policy
12. Time expected for student to spend in class
13. Deadlines
CONSISTENCY MUST BE MAINTAINED:

1. Weekly assignment and discussion deadlines
2. Weekly virtual office hours must be posted on home page
3. Posting and unlocking assignments/discussions weekly
4. 7 to 14 day grading turnaround after each weekly assignment deadline
   - Final course grades must be submitted based on the college guidelines
5. Once a week discussion responses
6. 48-hour email responses
7. Format and layout of course site should remain standard
   - Content may be personalized
   - Uploads/videos can be personalized

REQUIREMENTS/COMMITMENT

1. Must have access to required hardware and software (working computer)
2. Must have broadband Internet access (no dial-up service)
3. Must check in and interact with students a minimum of 3 to 4 times per week
4. Must post a minimum of one main discussion per week and respond to at least 25 percent or more students per week within the discussion forum.
5. Post and grade assignments on time (7 to 14 day grading turnaround)
6. Meet all deadlines, i.e. administrative, assignments, discussions, and grading
7. Willingness to engage and interact with students of different levels and diverse backgrounds
8. Participate in the course and instructor evaluation process
9. Instructor must be consistently “visible” throughout semester
DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENT CHECKLIST

1. Competent in using basic computers operating systems: Windows or Macintosh WORD 2007
2. Ability to navigate the Internet and web
3. Ability to work independently
4. Self-motivated and self-disciplined
5. Assessment how individual students learn - links
6. Ability to communicate effective through writing

DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR CHECKLIST

Communication is essential in an Online course and before accepting to teach in this mode, strongly consider the following to ensure student success.

**Technical Skills/Requirements**

1. Must meet a minimum proficiency
2. Must be trained, certified and evaluated for LASC’s Learning Management System (LMS) proficiency
3. Must use the uniformed Learning Management System adopted
4. Be familiar with Online teaching environment (link tutorial provided on home page)
5. Sufficient technical skills to develop the required course content using LASC’s LMS software
6. Access to and the ability to use e-mail.
REACHING AT-RISK STUDENTS

1. Identify at-risk students
   a. Students who have not checked in within a week
   b. Students who are scoring low on assessments
   c. Students who do not participate in forums, i.e. discussions, assignments, etc.
   d. Students who do not respond to emails
   e. Students who express a need, i.e. stress, emotional, circumstances, etc.
   f. Students who do not take advantage of office hours
   g. Students who are having difficulty with understanding assignments and requirements

2. Use the ASAP system located on the faculty page under services to alert counselors of at-risk student

3. Send email reminders of virtual office hours

4. Send individual email to encourage students to participate.
   a. I see that you are struggling in this class, but please continue to try your best. If you need any assistance, please contact me as soon as possible so that your grade does not suffer.
   
   b. I noticed that you did not participate this week. Please remember that it is essential that you are an active online student throughout the duration of the course so that your grade does not suffer. My goal is for you to succeed, but to do that you must do your part and I know you can do it.

5. Respond to questions in a timely manner

6. Encourage collaborative learning

7. Encourage online tutoring

8. Produce, record and upload orientation/course assistance tutoring video for at-risk students

9. Use JING to create lessons, save as flash file and post on course site
10. Attend free West Los Angeles College regularly scheduled tech fairs offered in person, through webinars and CCC Confer

11. Send (2) emails weekly encouraging and motivating students to participate and to turn in assignments on time, which will demonstrate high visibility.

12. Create instructor-student relationship as done in a traditional class

**DISABILITY POLICY**

The disability policy is the same for students in DE classes as well. Students would need to contact our office and provide us with disability documentation. Once the intake is completed, the online instructor will be notified her/him of the students' accommodations. Extended time will generally apply to exams/quizzes.

Post in syllabus: "If you have a documented disability and will require disability-related accommodations, please contact the DSP&S Office at 323-241-5480" or something like this would suffice.

**CREATE A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

1. Upload relevant videos, articles and other information to enhance learning

2. Direct students to outside websites related to course materials

3. Upload PowerPoint presentations and other learning tools to assist the student

4. Use the Online tools within LMS

5. Use as many LMS tools to stimulate participation and activity.

6. Individualize and create course content

7. Advise students to avoid cutting and pasting from documents as a response to discussion questions.

8. Check accuracy of student posts and assignments through the plagiarism check link

9. Include current event information and articles
MANDATORY FEEDBACK REQUIREMENTS

1. Respond to students within a 48 hours
2. Provide students with the same quality evaluation and input as provided within a traditional classroom setting
3. Post grades weekly
4. Provide feedback to students for improvement. Rubric is useful.
5. Assist struggling students. Encourage students to view tutoring and website links, located directly within the course or provide more individual feedback.
6. Send reminder e-mails expressing concerns or to encourage participation for absent students

SYLLABUS GUIDELINES

1. Use approved Academic Senate syllabi format accepted and agreed.
2. Be as specific as possible in the syllabi. Include:
   a. Course name
   b. Faculty name
   c. Contract information
   d. Virtual office hours
   e. Course objective
   f. Course description
   g. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)
   h. Plagiarism policy
   i. Participation policy
   j. Late policy
   k. Specify instructor’s time zone
l. Disabilities policies and services
m. Faculty expectations, such as discussion and posting requirements, late policy,
n. Identify assignment categories, such as quizzes/exams, projects, discussions, and research papers
o. List specific chapter reading assignments
p. Include points for all graded assignments within syllabus
q. Note specific deadline dates for each week as outlined in the course format
r. Note Drop/Add/W deadlines

**COURSE MANAGEMENT**

1. Include e-mail link from student to instructor on home page

2. Manage your classroom. Check in frequently to monitor discussions and classroom participation. Make sure discussion posts from students do not offend or create a negative environment. Erase them and ask the student to repost

3. Must accept and implement Successful Online Teaching (*refer to page 5 – Successful Online Teaching*) and the minimum qualifications for Online class pedagogy (*refer to page 4 – Online Class pedagogy*)

4. Choose instructional strategies most effective to accomplish a particular educational objective.

5. All courses offered at LASC shall comply with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure accessibility for all, as equity is our goal.

6. Update content regularly, including, but not limited to activities, lectures, notes, and assignments. (Weekly updates are recommended.)
BUILD ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION METHODS

1. Design course methods and strategies to achieve student learning outcomes

2. Design quizzes, tests, papers or projects to align assessment with student learning outcomes

3. Specifically define course objectives and goals

IT/LMS CHECKLIST

1. Student/Instruction must have technical support 24/7 with direct contact via a telephone number, email, and chat room.

2. Students in geographically diverse locations and different time zones should have equal 24/7 access to Online tech support.

3. Provide students with self-evaluation to assess readiness for online classes

4. Student Services links and information should be available to Online students.

5. There must be a system in place that generates temporary/permanent email addresses for all Online students. The email account should be automatically generated after a student enrolls in a class or after logging into the class by clicking a link to generate an Online email.

6. Monitor LMS

7. Monitor Tech Support
ENROLLMENT/ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

1. Students should clearly be aware that there are minimum requirements to take Online classes.

2. Create a waiting list for all DE courses

3. All students must have a valid and active email account before enrolling in an Online class (Until LMS or IT generates a temporary/permanent student email).

4. Time limit set to add/drop classes directly Online

5. Send important instructions via emails to DE instructors regarding add/dropping students

6. Communicate with DE instructors via email regularly during the crucial enrollment periods

7. Be aware of student/teacher ratio
COUNSELORS CHECKLIST

1. Students should clearly be aware that there are minimum requirements to take Online classes (See Checklist for students).

2. Students are encouraged to obtain a counselor/advisor or have access to one for the semester.

3. Understand that the same amount of work is required Online as in the classroom.

4. Counselors are available daily via telephone or email.
DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHECKLIST

Distance Education Committee is charged with…

1. Support Instructors with resources, workshops, seminars, and webinars
2. Maintain contact and communication with IT Department and LMS support services
3. Review the Distance Education Policies and Procedure Manual each semester
HOME PAGE FORMAT

Course Links
1. Live /Illuminate tutoring feature – real-time virtual class tool
2. Disability Services – link to policies and regulations
3. Instructor/Student Tech support – link to classroom support services

Access Helpful Tips/Videos
1. English basics tips/videos (grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/)
2. Math basics tips/videos (khanacademy.org)
3. Writing Essays tips/videos
4. Research Tips

Course Format – Each course should contain the following common links.
1. Course materials/Course Calendar
2. Syllabus
3. Plagiarism Check
4. Policies and Procedures – Netiquette in the classroom –
5. Student Responsibilities (link to student conduct or LASC’s)
6. Faculty Expectations
STUDENT SERVICES/RESOURCES

To achieve student success in an Online educational experience, the Distance Education College Program needs to include individual links on all course sites that give students immediate access to information on the course home page.

Library

- The Los Angeles Southwest College Library contains a collection of over 60,000 books, newspapers, electronic books, reserve books, videos, microfilm, dvd’s and cd-roms. The on-line computerized library catalog is accessible both on and off campus via the Internet. Library research may now be done at home using one of the many remote access electronic databases.

Tutoring

Several ways of achieving this goal by utilizing already in place tools:

- All Online courses have a link to Online tutoring sessions for writing and math.
- Whiteboard/video tutorial links
- Link to FAQ of English/Math Basics
- Online students should have the use of the English and Math departments’ writing labs that can be accessed through Online software.
- Specific introductory course lectures can be recorded and linked to approved Online courses.

Computer Services/Lab:

- Computer labs are available to students to work and to complete online class activities.

Tech Support:

Tech support available to faculty and students via email
DISTANCE EDUCATION COLLEGE

Participating Departments

1. Anthropology
2. Art
3. Biology
4. Business
5. Child Development
6. Computer Applications Office Technologies
7. Computer Science-Information Technology
8. English
9. Health
10. History
11. Humanities
12. Micro Biology
13. Music
14. Political Science
15. Psychology
16. Sociology
APPENDIX

APPENDIX A - Listed are important excerpts from the ACCJC News, Spring 2010

- By 2010, the Obama administration wants to ensure that community colleges graduate an additional five million students, so that 60% of American adults have at least one year of college education, and America has the most educated workforce in the world.

- The ACCJC has, with its current Standards, focused on what students have learned, and by giving its member institutions years to implement new strategies, is helping institutions to focus on improving student learning and increasing institutional effectiveness.

- The very large amount of money that governments provide to higher education institutions has increased governmental concerns that the funds be used wisely and effectively.

- The legitimacy of accreditation is also based in public confidence that accreditation has high standards that work to the benefit of students and of society.

- Distance education is becoming more and more common as a delivery mode for instruction among institutions within our region. Sixty percent of the substantive change reviews for the ACCJC this past year were for colleges offering more than 50% of a program, degree, or certificate through a mode of distance or electronic delivery.

- Requirements for accreditors to monitor include whether or not institutions have a process for verifying that the student who enrolls in a distance education course is the same student participating in the course and receiving credit for the course, as well as the growth of distance education and correspondence education courses/programs.

- ACCJC team members will conduct of-campus visits to prepare a brief report of findings to be integrated into the final team report.
APPENDIX B – DE BEST PRACTICES FOR ONLINE COURSES

Reviewed June 6, 2011

Purpose: This document is intended to serve as a guide and resource for all Los Angeles Southwest College Online courses.

**Basic Assumptions:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The courses offered Online will adhere to the same course outline requirements as the courses offered in traditional classrooms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>LA Southwest Department Chairs or their designees and Administration will ensure that all courses, including Online courses, as presented by instructors are adhering to course outline requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Online courses should be subjected to neither additional nor fewer requirements or regulations beyond those applied to traditional courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Online courses at LASC will be provided in an asynchronous-paced mode, using the Internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The requirements set down here are intended to foster Online course offerings, not to inhibit them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Online classes are intended to accommodate students who cannot or do not wish to attend on-campus sessions. These students may be encouraged, though not required, to physically attend on-campus sessions stipulated by instructors in their syllabi and in the schedule of classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Online classes may, at the discretion of the instructor, include proctored examinations whereby the student is required to take such examinations face-to-face, either on campus or overseen administered by instructor-approved proxies at locations off campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Hybrid classes are by nature a mixture of on-campus and Online content. Hybrid classes should be clearly identified as such by instructors in their syllabi and in course listings in the schedule of classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Teaching Online is fundamentally different from that of teaching traditional courses. Once a course is created and the Online content developed, the instructor must have command of Online pedagogy and technical skills.</td>
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The Basic Assumptions above are central to the Seven Guiding Principles that follow.
Seven Guiding Principles:

1. Encourage Student-Faculty, Student-Student contact
2. Encourage Student Cooperation
3. Encourage Active Learning
4. Give Prompt Feedback
5. Emphasize Time on Task
6. Project High Expectations
7. Respect Diverse Talents and Learning Styles

Classifications and Definitions:

Course classifications and definitions currently are:

1. **Web-Enhanced**: Is a regular class that utilizes web for course content and/or activities. Classes must meet as scheduled on campus. A Web Enhanced course does not require Curriculum Committee approval, however, if a student needs to use any technology for a face-to-face class, such information needs to be stated in the syllabus clearly.

2. **Hybrid**: If one or more class sessions (up to 50%) is replaced with online content and/or activities, it is considered a Hybrid course. A Hybrid course can utilize features of the Learning Management System, such as Course Documents, Discussion Boards, Virtual Classrooms, Groups, Assignments, External Links, Digital Drop Boxes and Grade Books, etc. The course can be offered during regularly scheduled class times or with Online components that replace some of the regularly scheduled class meetings. Notice of face-to-face class sessions will be given by instructors in their syllabus. Hybrid courses must be approved by the Curriculum Committee and noted as such in any published schedule of classes.

3. **Online**: An Online course is offered 100% online. Students cannot be required to attend a physical classroom when participating in an online course. An online course shall utilize features of the Learning Management System, such as Course Documents, Discussion Boards, Virtual Classrooms, Groups, Assignments, External Links, Digital Drop Boxes and Grade Books, etc. All course instruction, materials, assignments, and discussions are posted and done online. Online courses require of the student and instructor the same amount of course work and hours outside of the classroom as traditional courses; they are offered in a more flexible and independent environment. Online courses must be approved by the Curriculum Committee and noted as such in any published schedule of classes.
Faculty Qualifications:

Prior to being able to teach Online, faculty must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the supervising department chair or their designee the following knowledge and/or capabilities:

1. Learning theory as it applies to Online students
2. Online class pedagogy
3. The use of standard CMS tools to foster a “positive learning environment”
4. Sufficient technical skills to provide the required course content using Moodle or a publisher-provided CMS.
5. The ability to use email.

The above Online teaching knowledge and/or skills and others are covered in the course CAOT 134, “How to Teach an Online Course.” Potential instructors are encouraged to complete this course or the equivalent in order to demonstrate their Online teaching abilities. Faculty is also to be encouraged to upgrade their Online teaching skills by availing themselves of seminars and other in-service training.

Faculty Support:

1. Los Angeles Southwest College shall provide faculty support services specifically related to teaching via an electronic system. Chairs, designees and administrators shall have access at all times to Online course websites.
2. Los Angeles Southwest College shall ensure appropriate training opportunities for faculty who teach Online courses.
3. Los Angeles Southwest College shall provide faculty with adequate equipment, software and communications on campus for interaction with students, institutions and other faculty.

Student Support:

1. Prospective students shall have the ability to preview an Online class syllabus.
2. LA Southwest College shall provide students with clear, complete and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, technological competencies and skills necessary for successful course completion, technical equipment requirements, availability of academic support services, financial aid resources, and costs and payment policies.
3. Students shall have access to training via CAOT 133, “How to Succeed in an Online Course,” or its equivalent. Students shall be encouraged to avail themselves of this training prior to taking a Hybrid or Online course.
4. Los Angeles Southwest College shall provide its Online students with accessible library and other learning resources appropriate to the courses or programs delivered via electronic technology. It shall develop systems to support the students in accessing and using the library and other learning resources effectively.
5. Enrolled students shall have reasonable and adequate access to student services and resources appropriate to support their learning.
6. Los Angeles Southwest College shall provide an Online survey/questionnaire to help students evaluate their technical skill levels for taking and succeeding in Online or Hybrid classes.

7. Students shall have technical support services, i.e., Help Desk, available Monday – Friday from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm\(^1\) to help students resolve issues involving student interface with the Online classes.

**Course Requirements:**

1. All categories of Online course offerings shall meet the same Course Outline requirements as those of their traditional face-to-face course counterparts.

2. All Los Angeles Southwest College Online courses shall comply with the Title 5, Section 55211 regarding Instructor Contact. All LA Southwest College Online courses shall comply with the “Online Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges, Section 55211.” Rights and responsibilities of the instructors shall comply with the current AFT Contract as it refers to “Distributive/Distance Learning.”

3. Within the parameters specified by the Course Outline, individual instructors shall accomplish the required contact hours via a combination of these methods:
   a. Online lecture hours
   b. Online laboratory hours
   c. Student conferences (face-to-face or virtual)
   d. Student tutoring (face-to-face or virtual)
   e. Threaded discussion forums with appropriate instructor participation
   f. Email messaging
   g. Instant messaging
   h. Weekly announcements in the Course Management System
   i. Timely feedback for student work
   j. Instructor prepared e-lectures
   k. Virtual meetings and conferences.

4. All categories of Online course offerings shall include, at a minimum, the posting of each course syllabus and faculty information.

5. All categories of Online course offerings shall include a list of minimum hardware and software requirements in each course syllabus.

6. All Hybrid and Online courses shall also provide, at a minimum, the posting of lecture notes or other class materials, links to outside resources, and the posting of Online grades.

7. Online courses shall include, at a minimum, the following:
   a. Syllabus
   b. Class news (regular updates to the students)
   c. Questions forum (discussion forum for students to publicly ask questions related to the course material)
   d. Online lecture materials
   e. Online assignments

\(^1\) Note: finalized times of availability to be negotiated
f. Links to outside resources
g. Optional Online exams
h. Email links to the instructor
i. Electronic posting of grades

8. All Online courses shall be presented in an asynchronous-paced format. Individual activities or assignments can be synchronous, but the objective is to provide the students with the ability to take the Online courses asynchronously. Students will not be required to be physically present on campus unless otherwise noted.

9. Online students may be encouraged, though not required, to physically attend on-campus sessions except those of hybrid classes in which the instructor requires such sessions/exams as approved by the department and noted in the syllabus and schedule of classes.

10. Students have a right to timely feedback. Instructors shall, as a goal, answer students’ posted questions and email messages within 24 hours. Assignments should be graded and returned to students in a timely manner that is consistent with that of traditional face-to-face courses.

11. Online courses require special efforts by the instructors to build positive learning environments. Instructors shall use tools such as forums for introductions and open-ended discussion questions, group assignments, Online presentations, instant messaging, and others to foster virtual learning communities in their Online classes.

Course Management System:

1. The Los Angeles Southwest College Course Management System (CMS) is Moodle, which was endorsed by the Academic Senate.
2. All Online courses (all categories) shall use Moodle as their main portal through which students enter the Online courses.
3. Faculty who choose to use publisher-provided CMS’s and course materials may continue to do so, but they must provide students with a portal from Moodle into their courses.
4. Faculty may not use other CMS’s to develop Online courses. Moodle is to be used to provide the students with consistent and uniform Online course offerings and technical support.

Accessibility Requirements:

All courses offered at Los Angeles Southwest College shall comply with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Online courses at Los Angeles Southwest College use as guidelines the “Online Education: Access Guidelines for Students with Disabilities” as published by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office in August 1999. The Course Management System (Moodle) used to deliver Online courses provides for compliance with the guidelines as required in this document and accessible Online at:


Each individual instructor will use these features in presenting his/her Online course.
**Course Evaluations:**

All Online courses shall provide an Online assessment of the class, including instructor evaluation, based on the assessment tool used in traditional face-to-face courses, but modified to reflect Online content delivery.

**This Policy:**

1. Will be revisited each three (3) to five (5) years.
2. Is incompliance with the following documents:
   a. “Guidelines for Good Practice: Effective Instructor-Student Contact in Distance Learning” by The Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges, adopted Spring 1999
   b. “Distance Education Guidelines,” based on Title 5 Regulations, by Chancellor’s Office California Community Colleges, March 2004
   c. “Distance Education, Access Guidelines for Students with Disabilities,” by Chancellor’s Office, California Community Colleges, August 1999
   d. LACCD and AFT Agreement, 2005-2008, Article 40, “Distributive/Distance Learning”