

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION VERSUS CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**

LASC does not have correspondence courses. The difference between distance education and correspondence courses is outlined in the ACCJC's August 2012, *"The Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education."*

At LASC, all distance education courses are instructed through hybrid or fully online.

(A) Weekly contact between faculty and student is to be faculty initiated. Such interaction is important in order to assess the comprehension of the course material and to determine if the student is participating on a regular basis in the classroom as they would in an on-campus course.

(B) The instructor should interact with the students at least the same amount of time that would occur in an on-campus classroom. Such regular contact with online students ensures that the course is classified as distance education and not the format of a correspondence course.

***Examples to initiate effective communication in a distance education learning environment with students is as follows:***

<b>Contact initiated</b>	<b>Interaction</b>
Discussion forums/ threads	A) Post forums that require answering of questions and discussion among peers and faculty. Students can reply to a certain amount of discussions posted by their peers. B) Discussions should be posted regularly throughout the course for student learning, interaction with peers, and interaction with instructor. C) Discussions can coincide with reading material, articles, videos, etc. D) It is highly suggested that instructors take the time to reply to some or all discussion from students as a way to communicate, teach, and interact with students.

Course announcements	This allows the instructor to communicate information, guidelines, procedures and policies in a variety of ways, i.e. videos, messages, and question and answer format. The messages/announcements must be focused not generic, i.e. due dates or general issues.
Private messages	Faculty should respond to students no later than 24-48 hours
Chat room	The instructor can participate in an informal setting, such as the chat room, where students ask questions, communicate with peers, or post messages.
Email	Instructors should respond to emails within 24 to 48 hours.
Teams	<p>Instructors can create teams, particularly if the number of students reaches the maximum size. Teams can create a vehicle in which students feel more connected to a smaller group of students, thus participate more.</p> <p>Teams can be set up to respond to particular subject-related questions.</p> <p>Teams can work on projects and present to the class via PowerPoint.</p>
Feedback	<p>Instructors should regularly give feedback/comments, which include positive and critical feedback for improvement on assignments.</p> <p>Instructors should use rubrics to grade assignments.</p> <p>Feedback needs to be timely.</p>