

Fullerton College Curriculum Committee

Distance Education Guidelines & Procedures

Approved December 2, 2009

These guidelines are based on the Recommendations of the Fullerton College Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) for Best Practices in Courses Taught “*At a Distance*” (12/6/2007)

I. Curricular considerations for a Course Outline of Record

- a. The expectation is that courses offered “*At a Distance*” will be comparable to traditional face to face courses in content, methods, and rigor. As such, “**Methods of Instruction**”, “**Methods of Evaluation**” and other major sections of the COR should apply across formats to online, hybrid, teleweb, and traditional face to face courses.
- b. A separate “**Distance Education**” section will be completed for any/all courses proposed for online/hybrid/teleweb delivery.
- c. This DE section will include a sub-section detailing contact types and frequencies. This sub-section will indicate how the Methods of Instruction will be delivered “*at a distance*”.
- d. The DE section should demonstrate: Active involvement of students using multiple learning styles
- e. The following are likely to appear in this DE section:
 1. Content material may be delivered using text, audio, video, pictures, and/or diagrams via the internet or cable television.
 2. Students may engage in synchronous and/or asynchronous discussion with classmates and/or their instructor.
 3. Assignments may be individual or group.
 4. Virtual or “live” field trips or labs.
 5. Assignments will vary in how students will access and respond to them. Examples include: reading/typing, viewing/creating electronic visual images, listening to/recording audio, watching/imitating, and interactive print, kinesthetic, or oral activities within a face-to-face portion of the course, cable channel or on the web.
- f. Regular, effective contact between instructors and students should be evident from the description in the DE section:
 1. Instructor availability (via internet, telephone, in-office meetings as stated in the syllabus) throughout each week with timely responses to student inquiries
 2. Several of the following are likely to appear under “*Contact Types*” and “*Frequencies*”:
 1. Email based exchanges
 2. Assignment based exchanges
 3. FAQ pages
 4. Face-to-face or virtual orientation
 5. Use of FC’s portal (My Gateway) or an instructor website outside of the FC’s Course Management System (CurricUNET)
 6. Announcements (within the CMS, via email, use of My Gateway)
 7. On-campus meetings
 8. Office hours (on campus or online)
 9. Interactive Q&A Chat rooms or Discussion Boards
 10. Telephone based exchanges
 11. Video conferencing
 12. Chat rooms for studying or specific topics
 13. Discussion Boards for specific topics

14. Information via paper handout, orientation meeting, and/or website or portal that specifies ways students can contact their instructor if unable to log-in to the course as well as links to technical Help sources
 15. Calendar Tool
 16. Grade-book tool and/or other tools that indicate a student's progress in the course
 17. Other, as new technologies emerge.
3. Several of the following may appear:
1. Online or in-person multiple choice, matching, true-false, fill-in, short answer quizzes and exams
 2. Essay exams and papers
 3. Graded or non-graded participation in asynchronous Discussions and Chat sessions
 4. Graded or non-graded participation in synchronous Chat sessions
 5. Written reactions to assigned readings
 6. Written reviews of virtual or live field trips
 7. Library or web-based assignments
 8. Progress reports
 9. Participation in online surveys
 10. Participation in web-based activities that may require written, oral, or keyboarded responses
 11. Participation in virtual or live field trips, labs, orientations
 12. Basically anything you could do if the class were taught face-to-face
 13. Other, as new technologies emerge.

II. Best Practices in Distance Education

- a. A rapport between instructor and students and among students should be established and maintained throughout the course utilizing several of the following methods:
- b. Easily accessible orientation information must be made available at or before the start of the course.
 1. In-person demonstration & discussion
 2. Guided hands-on experience in a computer lab
 3. Synchronous or asynchronous online "meeting rooms"
 4. Online tutorials
 5. Written instructions (hand-outs and/or on the web)
 6. Orientation information should include:
 - a. How to find out what computer hardware, software and settings are required
 - b. Minimum computer skills (e.g., creating and saving documents, use of email, navigating the web, etc.)
 - c. Log-in procedures
 - d. Where to seek assistance with log-in and connection problems
 - e. How to contact the instructor when the student is unable to log-in
 - f. Expectations for student behavior in the Distance Ed course (online netiquette)
 - g. A virtual tour of the course via written instruction, assignments, and live or recorded demonstrations
 7. Student information/homepages
 8. Faculty information/homepages pages
 9. Students should be working on the same topics/chapters at the same time so as to be available to one another, as they would be in a traditional, on-campus class.

10. Threaded discussion topics in which students must read and respond to their classmates' posts
 11. Threaded discussion topics in which students and instructor (and/or teaching assistants) read and respond to student posts.
 12. Synchronous and/or asynchronous Chat rooms(optional)
 13. Collaborative assignments (optional)
- c. Instructor availability and timely response (e.g. 48 hours Monday-Friday in most cases) to student questions using at least one of the following methods:
1. E-mail
 2. Voicemail or telephone
 3. "Ask Me" Discussion Boards or Chat rooms
 4. Virtual office hours
 5. On-campus, face-to-face office hours
- d. Confidential feedback for students about their level of success in the class using at least one of the following:
1. Email
 2. Voicemail or telephone
 3. Access to "My Grades" and/or "My Progress" tools
 4. Return of graded assignments with instructor comments
 5. Referral and/or reminders to students to check the course syllabus or assignments list for information about what work and level of success is required for a passing grade.
- e. "*Time on Task*" – students will be actively engaged in class-work throughout the entire term of the course.
1. Regularly distributed but flexible due dates for assignments and assessments allow students scheduling flexibility but also encourage them to keep current.
 2. As in face-to-face classes, students should be working on their coursework every week that the class is in session.
- e. We expect that some Divisions/Departments may favor certain techniques over others, given their unique content and processes. Division/Department guidelines are likely to be more specific than what we would expect from campus-wide guidelines.

III. Mandates for Student Access

- a. Distance Education materials must be reviewed for 508/504 compliance (access for students of differing abilities) before the course is offered.
1. There are several software programs to assist with this task. Examples include: A-Prompt, Bobby, Watchfire, and CynthiaSays.
 2. Training materials for creating compliant web pages and internet activities is available through FC Staff Development. DSS staff is available to consult with faculty needing additional clarification.
- b. Note: When assigning a new course (or new instructor to an existing DE course) it will be the responsibility of the Dean to inform the instructor of the necessity for this review.

RESOURCES:

FC's Virtual Instruction Academy training materials

Collaborative conversation with FC online instructors and mentors

“Guidelines for Good Practice”

http://www.curriculum.cc.ca.us/Curriculum/GoodPract/Downloads/EffectiveInstructor_Student.pdf

CSUF UPS 411.104 Policy On Online Instruction

Good Practice is defined in this article:

<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/summer72/tobin72.html>