APPENDIX XXII

Distance Education

Reference: Board Policy 4105 Distance Education (http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/vcccd/Board.nsf/goto/?open&id=CM74HV0BB230); Administrative Procedure 4105 Distance Education (http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/vcccd/Board.nsf/goto/?open&id=CF5VYV831504)

Definitions:

Per Title 5, Section 55200, distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. This definition includes both hybrid and fully online courses. All distance education is subject to the general requirements under Title 5 as well as the specific requirements of articles 55200 and 55204. In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements that may be imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Section 121000 et seq.) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. Section 794 d).

The U.S. Department of Education defines distance education as education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. (Title 34 Subtitle B, Chapter IV Part 600 Subpart A Section 600.2)

Distance Education Instructor Certification

Distance Education (DE) faculty must be certified to teach distance education prior to being assigned a distance education course.

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 instruction in a course replaces face-to-face time, or if an entire section of a course, 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 Procedure 4020 Program, Curriculum and Course Development (http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/vcccd/Board.nsf/goto/?open&id=CRJ3G806C426), Program and Curriculum Development. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses, by the District College's Curriculum Committee.

Duration of Approval

All Distance Education courses approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes in the course outline of record that are reviewed and approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses, by the District College's Curriculum Committee.

Addendum to Course Outline

An addendum to the official course outline of record shall be completed 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 College'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.
- For a program that measures progress in clock hours, 24 clock hours per week.
- A series of courses or seminars that equals 12 semester hours in a maximum of 18 weeks.
- The work portion of a cooperative education program in which the amount of work performed is equivalent to the academic workload of a full-time student.

Faculty Selection and Workload

Instructors of course sections delivered through Distance Education will be selected in accordance with the relevant sections of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement between the VCCCD and AFT Local 1828.

Course Quality Standards

The same quality standards of course quality are applied to the Distance Education courses as are applied to in-person classes.

Course Quality Determinations

Determinations and judgments about the quality of the Distance Education course are made with the full involvement of the District College's Curriculum Committee.

Establishing Regular, Effective, and Substantive Faculty-Initiated Contact:

Faculty will use the following practices of regular and substantive contact between instructor and students, as well as among students, either synchronously or asynchronously, in their Distance Education courses:

a. Regular Announcements: Faculty should make general course related announcements to the students in their distance education classes on a weekly basis, whether by the announcement area in the Learning Management System or via e-mails to the entire class.

b. Establishing Expectations: Faculty will include in their syllabus or course orientation a description of the frequency and timeliness of instructor-initiated contact and feedback, as well as expectations for student participation. This should include the timeframe for responding to e-mails and phone calls, the timeframe for receiving feedback on student work, the timeframe for submission of assignments, and the expectations of discussion board postings required of the student. This information will be available to students on the first day of class.

c. Faculty-Initiated Interaction: Faculty will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they have access to the course materials, that they understand the material, that they understand what is required of them, and that they are participating in the activities of the course. There are various ways of accomplishing this, including but not limited to, asynchronous discussion board forums with appropriate faculty input in the forum or grade book, synchronous chats, video conferencing, individualized contact via phone or e-mail, and, in the case of a hybrid course, in face-to-face meetings.

d. Timely Feedback on Student Work: Faculty will grade and provide feedback on student work within a reasonable timeframe. If discussion boards are required, students should be given guidelines at the outset of

the course and feedback on their participation throughout the duration of the course.

e. Content Delivery: Faculty will provide content material either through online materials (in written, video, and/or audio forms) and/or through introductions to materials not created by the instructor (such as publisher-provided materials, web sites, streaming video, etc.).

f. Notifying Students of Faculty Unavailability/Offline Time: If the instructor must be out of contact briefly for any reason, notification to students will be made in the announcements area of the course and/or via e-mail that includes when the students can expect regular effective contact to resume. This should occur for any offline periods lasting longer than three business days.

g. Faculty Absence Notification: If a faculty member must be offline for a period of time that results in the faculty member not being able to meet his or her regular effective contact for any given week, this would be considered an absence and the Dean of the division in which the course is taught must be notified.

h. Face-to-Face Forms of Contact: Faculty are encouraged to utilize the face-to-face forms of contact mentioned in Title 5, Section 55211 (e.g., group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, and library workshops), but to keep in mind that in the case of fully online classes it will not be possible for all students to attend such activities and these activities cannot be mandatory unless the course is hybrid and meeting times are announced in the schedule of classes. Alternate online activities, such as those mentioned in the sections above, that entail instructor-student contact should be made available for such students who cannot attend.

i. Student to Student Contact: Faculty will ensure ongoing regular and effective student-to-student contact. Best practices include, but are not limited to, include implementing communication means for varied types of interaction in the course design, assigning and monitoring weekly assignments and projects that promote collaboration among students, posing questions in the discussion boards that encourage critical thinking skills and promote interaction, and monitoring student engagement to ensure that students participate with depth.

Enrollment, Attendance, and Participation in Distance Education Courses
Students will register and enroll in distance education courses in the same manner as traditional courses.

Attendance will be determined through contact with instructors in the first week of the term; logging into the learning management system does not constitute active participation. Instructors may drop students from distance education courses for lack of active participation. Active participation may include, but is not limited to, writing in discussion forums, submitting assignments, taking quizzes and/or exams, or other interactive class activities.

Instructional time in all credit courses, regardless of modality, follows the standard formula derived from Title 5, section 55002.5. One unit of credit is defined as a minimum of 48 total hours of student work, inclusive of all contact hours plus outside-of-class, or homework. Instructor must plan an approximate one to-two ratio of instructional time to homework and study based on units of credit courses. For example: in a 3-unit online course, online course work should be equivalent to 3 hours of face-to-face work per week of a regular term (completing course work, such as but not limited to, lecture, discussion, assignments, and quizzes); and homework would be equivalent to 6 hours work per week of a regular term.

Accessibility
Each course that is delivered through distance education must comply with up-to-date Section 508 accessibility requirements. All course content delivered via distance education must be accessible to all persons including those with disabilities. All activities and instructional media shall be accessible, including, but not limited to,

a. accurately captioned videos

b. transcribed audio files

c. images that have alternative text

d. readable course materials using effective font, color contrast, and spacing

e. meaningful hyperlink text

f. documents that are created in such a way that screen reading software is able to read them

g. accessible synchronous communication

h. prescribed accommodations that are followed for other graded course activities

i. keyboard navigation.

Proctoring
Distance education courses may require exams to be taken in a proctored setting. Faculty members will clearly communicate in their syllabi any proctoring requirements along with options to complete.

Test Proctoring Fees

There is no authority that permits the District to charge students a fee to cover the costs associated with having someone present while students are taking tests, quizzes, exams.

Verification of Student Identity
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 course 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 ensure the institution utilizes one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify student identity:

A. Secure login and password to enable authenticated access to student information and course management system.

B. Proctored examinations.

C. 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.

Student Support Services

The Colleges will assure that distance learners have reasonable access to student support and library services that are comparable to those services provided to on-campus learners.