

# **FRC Distance Education**

## **Faculty Handbook**

Covers Hybrid and Fully Online Courses

June 2017



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## Introduction

This handbook provides an overview of the procedures, policies, and best practices for teaching Distance Education courses at FRC. Some “how to...” instructions are included although this is not intended to be a comprehensive manual about DE technology. Sources about technical information and available training are summarized in Appendix C.

The key predictors of student success in online courses are: (1) The quality of the instructional design and (2) The quality of the student-teacher interaction. The mode of delivery itself, after other factors are taken into account, are not predictive of student success or learning outcomes. Well-planned and engaged teaching are the primary ingredients for successful instruction, whether online or on campus. These factors are the main topics covered in this handbook, along with policies, procedures, and basic information about the availability and use of distance education technology at FRC.

State and Federal guidelines regarding distance education have been changing rapidly. Even if you were familiar with DE regulations in the past, it is a good idea to review current guidelines, policies, and laws. This is the subject of the next section.

Nothing in this handbook should be construed as overriding any formal policies, procedures, federal or state regulations, or bargaining agreements. It is meant as a practical handbook to be applied within the context of the previously mentioned regulations and agreements.

## DE Definitions, Policies, and Course Development

Federal and state agencies have established definitions for “online” courses, minimum standards for instructor and student interaction, and guidelines for developing and reviewing online courses, all directed to ensure that distance education courses are comparable in content and effectiveness to on campus courses. Courses that are delivered over the internet are not necessarily classified as “distance education.” If they are not interactive enough they may be classified as “correspondence” courses. This classification impacts state and federal funding for the college, and may impact financial aid for the student. All courses currently delivered over the internet at FRC should be designed to fit the definition of “distance education” rather than “correspondence” courses. In other words, they should include significant opportunities for student-instructor interaction rather than just deliver and collect course material and evaluations.

### Definitions: Hybrid, Online, and Correspondence Courses

Courses that only use the Internet to *distribute* course material and do not provide online *instruction* are not considered online (distance education) courses. Instruction is being provided if any portion of the contact hours for the course is delivered through the use of

DE technology. For instance, if you always meet your course on campus at the regularly scheduled time but use Canvas to supplement your course, the course is not considered an online course. But if you substitute online activities for face-to-face instruction, the course is referred to as a “hybrid” course if the amount of instruction is less than 50%, or referred to as “online” if 50% or more of the instruction is provided through DE technology.

Although correspondence courses are currently reported to the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) as one type of distance education category, for most other purposes correspondence courses are not considered distance education courses. For instance, students taking correspondence courses are not eligible for the same federal aid as students taking online courses, and the accrediting agency for FRC (ACCJC) distinguishes correspondence from distance education courses. Key differences are that correspondence courses are self-paced, feedback on assignments from the instructor takes longer than a week, and the interaction between the instructor and student is minimal.

### **Definition of “Regular and Effective Contact”**

The federal education code, the ACCJC, and the CCCC require that “distance education” courses involve “regular and effective contact” between the instructor and student. Each college district is responsible for defining how this requirement is defined and implemented. The amount and quality of instructor and student interaction in online courses are key factors that are evaluated by outside agencies and FRC as part of course and instructor assessments.

“Regular and effective contact” at FRC is defined as at least weekly exchanges between instructor and student in which instructors provide substantive feedback to students, and in which students have the opportunity to ask questions or make comments. Examples include online discussion forums, collaborative exercises, chat, wiki participation, live webinars, audio/video conferencing, and email exchanges. A significant amount of the interactive assignments should be required and graded. The interactions may include structured and graded interaction between students. One benchmark for the appropriate amount of graded interaction in an online course is to ask, “Can the student be successful in the course (receive a C or better) without participating in online interactions?” If the answer is “yes” then more graded online interactions may need to be employed.

### **The Course Outline of Record and DE Addendum**

California Community College instructors are required to design and teach their courses according to the official “Course Outline of Record” (COR) which minimally is to be approved by the local Curriculum Committee. At FRC, CORs are approved by the FRC Curriculum Committee, Senate, Board of Trustees, and in most cases sent to the CCCC for approval. The COR specifies the units that the course satisfies, the course description which

appears in the catalog, a sample topic outline, sample educational materials, and Student Learning Outcomes that are to be reached by successful students in that course.

The State requires that DE Course Outlines of Records must also be separately reviewed to ensure they contain sufficient guidelines about how the course SLOs will be met using DE methods of delivery. At FRC this review is recorded in the DE Addendum form which undergoes review by the FRC Curriculum Committee and is attached to the COR. FRC instructors should use the COR and the DE Addendum as a guide for developing their course. The title, course description, and course SLOs in the COR should be included in the course syllabus. See the Faculty Handbook for further information about what the syllabus should include.

The COR documents are available through the online management program "CurricUNET." It is available at <http://frc.curricunet.com>. If you have difficulty accessing CurricUNET contact the Office of Instruction.

## **Qualifications for Teaching FRC Online Courses**

The minimum requirements for teaching online courses at FRC are the same for online courses as courses taught on campus with the addition of demonstrated competency in the technology that is to be used in the delivery of the course.

Competency in the skills needed to teach online courses can be demonstrated in three ways: (1) successful completion of training at FRC in the use of the LMS and in instructional design that are approved by the Director of Distance Education and the CIO, (2) successful training through another institution or organization that has been approved by the Director of Distance Education and CIO as comparable to the FRC training requirements, or (3) evidence of having successfully taught online courses using the instructional design principles and comparable technology that will be used for their FRC course assignment. Check the FRC website or the Office of Instruction for training available on campus.

Online courses and instruction are evaluated as part of the normal faculty evaluation process. The FRC Faculty Handbook and the faculty union bargaining agreements provide details about the evaluation process.

One aspect of the evaluation of faculty is a peer evaluation based in part on observing a class meeting. This part of the evaluation of online teaching is accomplished by peer evaluators browsing through your online course. Normally other instructors are not allowed to view your course area without your prior permission. However, permissions were approved by the Council On Instruction (COI) and the Faculty Senate for the Dean of Instruction and peer evaluators to visit your online course, as well as a few other designated

FRC personnel for technical support purposes or to help resolve accessibility issues for students with disabilities. *Addendum A: Authorization to Access Online Courses Areas* at the end of this document lists FRC personnel who are authorized to enter online courses. *Appendix B: FRC Distance Education Standards* provides an overview of the criteria used to evaluate online courses at FRC.

## Canvas: The FRC Learning Management System

FRC uses Canvas as our Learning Management System for online instruction. All California Community Colleges are moving to Canvas as part of the state Online Education Initiative. This system is partially integrated into the FRC Student Information System (“Banner”) and is accessed through a Single Sign-On (SSO) process that uses the same login credentials as your FRC email/network account. This account also grants you access to lab and classroom computers. Although you must login using your FRC email credentials, once you are in Canvas you can choose to have email forwarded to other email accounts.

Even if you plan to use online materials provided by a textbook company or other third party resources you should use your Canvas course area to provide links to those systems. Better yet, many companies offer plugins for Canvas that will integrate teaching materials into Canvas. Contact the FRC Canvas administrator for information about how to integrate such services into your Canvas course.

There are many help files and technical support options for Canvas that can be accessed from any Canvas page by clicking on the “?” at the bottom left of Canvas pages. This brings up a small window of links to a number of support options. There are detailed user guides for students, instructors, and administrators (of Canvas), excellent video tutorials, a link to the Canvas Community which contains a wide range of discussions, and a “Report a Problem” option if Canvas doesn’t seem to be functioning correctly. Most importantly, there is a 24/7 phone support number that anyone can use at any time.

**NOTE:** The links for help on the Canvas login page should be used for support for login or enrollment issues by FRC staff. Use the links within Canvas for help with Canvas by Canvas staff.

## Student and Instructor Account Creation in Canvas

Currently Canvas course areas are automatically created for all FRC courses whether or not they are online courses. Instructors and students are added to these courses as the official record is available in the MyFRC campus information system, a.k.a., Banner (a link to MyFRC is on the top right of the FRC website). Expect up to one business day for enrollment updates after official registration is completed during the first weeks of the semester. As

the semester progresses, updates may not occur as quickly as during the first weeks of the semester. No separate process is required for your course area and student enrollments in Canvas to be available. If there are problems with your enrollment you should not attempt to change student accounts or add students manually to your course area. Contact FRC Information Services using the help desk links next to the Canvas login box. Do not submit help requests for or enrollment issues or login problems using the help available within Canvas. These are issues that must be handled by FRC staff.

The MyFRC area is where you can check your official FRC rosters and where you will submit course grades at the end of the semester. You can also access various personal employee information through this service. Contact Human Resources or the Office of Instruction if you did not receive login information during your hiring process.

### **Attendance and Dropping Students**

Verifying that students are regularly and actively participating in your online course is essential, especially the first several weeks. The level of activity of students in the first several weeks of online courses is highly predictive of the successful completion of the course. Students who get behind or whose frustrations with the online course environment aren't addressed early in the course are more likely to drop or fail. You should watch for stragglers throughout the semester but this is especially important in the opening weeks of the term. As mentioned earlier, "attending" an online course requires the student to actively participate, not just enter the course and view materials. You are within your rights to drop a student from your course if after two weeks they have only browsed material but never actively participated.

This means that you need to provide the opportunity for students to engage in "regular and effective contact" every week. This could include assignments that take more than one week to complete, but generally speaking weekly assignments work better to keep students on track. Creating a short exercise that is required the first week in which students must view the syllabus and take a quiz on its content is one way to verify they can gain access to the course and that they are willing to participate. Adding a discussion forum in which students introduce themselves and are required to respond to other student posts is a way to foster student-student interaction early in the course. You may consider including a simple exercises at the beginning of your course that require students to demonstrate their ability to use each of the activities you plan to assign like quizzes, forums, or essay assignments. Watch for students who don't complete a newly introduced activity to make sure it isn't because they are having problems with the technology. If you address a student having problems with a particular problem right away, you can avoid a student having their

grade sink if they are required to use that technology for higher value assignments later in the term.

Consider making a list of the students who do not respond or who respond infrequently each week and emailing them to ask if there is a problem. This will send the message that regular contact is required and that you are there to help. If they do not respond after two weeks, even after emails, you should notify Admissions and Records with the following information in an email with a request to drop the student:

- Your name
- The course Subject Code , Number, Section, and CRN (ex: ENGL 101-01 CRN: 5278)
- The student's name and FRC ID Number (it begins with 900)
- The last date of the student's activity in the course (go to the student's detailed profile page to see a log of their access)

All the information above except participation information can be found on your official course roster. Once you receive confirmation that the student has been dropped by Admissions and Records your Canvas roster should be updated within 1 business day at the beginning of the semester and possibly within a few days later in the semester. You should not manually drop the student. Adds and drops are uploaded from Banner to Canvas by our Information Services department.

## **Organizing Your Course**

The organization of online courses is even more critical than for face-to-face courses. The most common reason for students dropping or failing online courses is the difficulty they face in scheduling regular times to study and complete their course work. Often students sign up for online courses because they have a job or family responsibilities that make it difficult or impossible to schedule an on-campus course. Organizing your course in a way that helps students to remember what they are required to do, when they are required to do it, and how much time it will take, can play a critical role in assuring their success. Of course it also provides you with the same advantages!

The most important strategy for organizing online courses to assist time management is to divide your course into modules. The "Modules" feature in Canvas is a good tool to use for this and is easy to organize. You may consider making the Modules page in Canvas the home page for your course. A consistent repetitive pattern of assignments and their due dates with a clear beginning and end can make time management much easier for both you and the students. The value of this aspect of the organization of your online course cannot

be overemphasized! It can make the difference between the success or failure of many of your students.

Here's an example of a module organization that would be repeated every week or every topic:

- **Overview:** A short overview of this module including learning outcomes
- **Main Content:** Reading and/or audio/video. (presentation of the core weekly information with an introduction or guide to key points or themes)
- **Supporting Resources:** Videos, PowerPoints, flashcards, brief quizzes with feedback about comprehension, graphics (textbook or other websites can be useful here, or FRC library videos, YouTube videos, TED videos, or original resources created by you)
- **Interaction:** Discussion forums, virtual office hours (chat or video conference), group projects, peer grading exercises
- **Assessment:** Quizzes, essays, projects, and/or graded forum discussions
- **Summary and Preview:** Summary of what the student should have learned, how this module fits within the overall course, and what's next!

The different functions listed above don't have to be separate activities or resources. For instance, if you use peer grading, portions of assessment may be accomplished along with providing an interactive experience. The main organizational principle is that your course follows approximately the same pattern in each module.

## Preparing Course Material

### File Types

You can upload just about any type of file to the web. However, files such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint usually need to be downloaded by the user and then opened in the program that created them. So if you upload Word, Excel, or PowerPoint files, for instance, the student will need to have a compatible program on their computer to open them. Most students do have these Microsoft Office products and if the student has access to FRC campus labs these products are available on any of the campus computers. But some students may have older versions of these programs that are incompatible with more recent releases, and some may not own the needed Microsoft product at all. One option is for students to download a reader program from Microsoft (free on [Microsoft's website](#)) or use a non-Microsoft program that will open them. [OpenOffice](#) is one of the most popular free suites of programs that can open and save documents in Microsoft formats (See Appendix C for links to readers and other resources).

Another option is to save all your documents in PDF format. Saving files in this format is an option in most programs when you select “Save as...”. The browser plugin to read PDF files is included in every web browser, even older browsers. However, the PDF reader may not display all features of the original document. For instance, it won’t preserve PowerPoint animations such as items sliding in and out, or Excel calculations.

Another option is to use a service such as Google Docs. Google Docs and similar free services allow you to create and share documents online that have virtually all the features of desktop programs, but without the user needing to download the program. You can use the application for Google Docs and some other services in Canvas to integrate services into your course so the student doesn’t have to leave Canvas and use a separate login process. Just as important, integrating these services into Canvas provides a better record of student activity than directing them to external websites. You should set up the services in advance and become familiar with their use.

### **Maintaining Accessibility for the Disabled**

By law and as a duty to our students, faculty should follow guidelines for maximizing the accessibility of instruction by students with disabilities. Since many students who take online class are also students on campus, the campus Disabled Student Programs and Services office (DSP&S) can be of great assistance by providing software and hardware support to students in their on-campus lab. You can also call their office for recommendations about how to accommodate online students with special needs. In many cases, students with disabilities will be making use of the DSP&S support and will notify the faculty member of their special needs as verified by the DSP&S staff.

The most common accommodations requested are extra time for completing tests and the use of assistive technology for the vision impaired. You should include a notice in your syllabus that students with special needs should let you know about their needs as early as possible (see the Faculty Handbook for guidelines about this portion of your syllabus). Canvas allows the instructor to set individual time periods for the completion of quizzes (go to “user overrides” in the Quiz administration menu when a quiz is selected for viewing, editing, or grading. See Figure 9).

Canvas is designed to be compliant with accessibility guidelines in most of its general functions and modules. However, how you prepare and display your material may affect its accessibility. For instance, most Canvas instructions contain text that can be read by screen readers for the vision impaired. But screen readers often cannot read text that has been embedded in images. Embedding text in images also prevents the use of software designed to enlarge and increase the contrast of text. Consequently you should avoid including

important information directly in images. If it is unavoidable, provide a separate text display or file that contains the same information.

An important option when using images in your course is to add an “alt” tag with the image (see Figure 10). An “alt” tag is a small amount of text that should be added when you are inserting an image in a web page, although it can be added later. In Canvas this field is called “Alt text.” You’ll see it in the box to add an image in the section titled “Attributes.” Once added the text isn’t visible except when hovering over the image or in screen reader software for the vision impaired. The alt text should be a brief description of images, not a lengthy explanation.

If you use fonts in your course area of different colors be sure the text is high contrast against its background. Also avoid using unusual fonts or fonts smaller than 12 pt.

If you use videos in your course make sure they include closed captioning or provide the narration or dialogue in a text file. All of the online videos in the large collection available through the FRC library are closed captioned, and transcripts of the videos are also available. Most videos provided by textbook companies are now closed captioned. Look for the accessible versions and upload any available transcripts of the narration. Many tools that format videos for display on websites include the ability to add closed captioning, including the tools on YouTube.com. If a video you want to use is not closed captioned, check with the library to see if it is available in another format that does include captioning. See the resources in Appendix C for links to accessibility standards and guidelines, or contact the FRC DSP&S office.

Ancillary materials from publishing companies, the FRC library and the Internet are all valuable sources of images, sound files, free textbooks and classics, videos, and PowerPoint slides. There are also many programs that allow you to scan images, edit videos, and record sound.

It is better to use a few technologies in creative ways than to use a different technology each time you want to add variety to your course. Even if you tell students that some of the technologies you are making available are optional, some students will attempt to explore every piece of information just to be thorough. Although many students appreciate being provided different media presentations of your course material, learning how to use different technologies or dealing with new computer compatibility issues while they are trying to meet a deadline can be very stressful. The best media resources are easy to use, are accessible to students with disabilities, clearly address course goals, engage your students, and promote dialogue with you or other students.

## **Student and Instructor Technical Support**

Students and faculty have a number of technical support options. Guides and excellent videos are available by following the links in the help area inside Canvas. Encourage (or perhaps require) your students to review the intro videos on how to use Canvas and how to be a successful online student. Links to these resources can be found by going to the “FRC Online” section of our main website and then clicking “Taking Online Courses” on the left. Encourage your students to use the 24/7 Canvas phone support for problems or questions about how Canvas works, and don’t hesitate to contact them yourself. Login issues and email account problems must be addressed by FRC staff. Direct students to use the links to the help forms on the Canvas login page for these issues. If the student is on campus, FRC library and computer lab staff are often able to help. Encourage your students to submit a help request ticket right away rather than spending lots of their own time trying to figure out a technical problem.

For faculty near campus, there are often DE related professional development opportunities during “flex” activities that are available several times a year, one before the Fall semester, one during winter break, and one in the spring. Watch FRC email for announcements and check the agenda for workshops on distance education.

Turnitin, the company that makes the plagiarism and essay grading software available in Canvas, has excellent videos on the use of their product. You can go directly to their site at [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com), or find links to their videos in the FRC Distance Education Faculty Training course in Canvas. There are also links to Turnitin resources at the end of this document.

There are many quality Canvas tutorials on YouTube.com. Some are linked in the FRC faculty training course and a quick search on YouTube.com may locate a video on the exact question you have.

## **Fostering Interaction in Your Online Course**

Fostering student engagement through creating a sense of immediacy and personalization of the educational experience is key for the continued participation and eventual success of the student.

There are a number of tools available for creating online interaction between the instructor and students, and between students and students. Reviewing all of them is beyond the scope of this handbook, but here is a brief introduction to several commonly used features.

One of the most common is the activity in Canvas is called a “Discussion.”

The “Discussion” tool is common in LMS’s and is sometimes called an online “discussion,” “threaded discussion,” or a “bulletin board.” Although some features may vary in different systems they all allow the instructor proposes a topic and allow students to respond to the instructor or to each other about the same topic. You can create as many discussions as you want but you should be consistent in how you use them so students get familiar with what is expected. They can be graded or ungraded, made available during certain time periods, students may be required to post their response before they can see posts by other students, and more.

You can allow students to start their own topics which is great for general discussions, but not recommended if you want to keep the interaction more focused. The default settings for the discussion in Canvas allow students to post topics within the forum area as well as reply to the posts of the instructor and students. The instructor can choose to grade or not grade posts, but some level of participation should be required. Selecting the option that forces participants to be “subscribed” to the discussion results in students being automatically emailed a copy of the posts with a link back to the Canvas course so they may see the post in context and post their own reply.

Many schools use weekly “webinars” to provide interaction with the students, and to deliver a substantial amount of instructional material. This feature does involve some prior experience or training in using webinar technology, but it can serve as the centerpiece for an online course.

Canvas does not include an integrated webinar feature. Fortunately the CCCC supports free training and webinar technology for all California Community College campuses through the website [cccconfer.org](http://cccconfer.org) . The [cccconfer.org](http://cccconfer.org) webinars can be linked within Canvas so a new window is launched for the webinar when the student clicks on the link.

Webinars allow a large number of participants to interact within the webinar at the same time. The webinars support the display of PowerPoint slides, live audio and video, sharing computer screens with participants, live chat, audio participation through a phone that can be heard by the rest of the participants, live sending of attachments, immediate polling of students, thumbs up and thumbs down feedback, “raising your hand” to request the ability to respond to the class, and more. Shortly after the webinar is over it is available as a video archive that can be accessed for review or for students who missed the live presentation.

The [cccconfer.org](http://cccconfer.org) site is also a great source for training opportunities and archived webinars on a wide variety of topics, including information about how to schedule your webinars.

The “assignments” activity in Canvas is for posting essays or papers. Feedback on “assignments” in Canvas can qualify as “interaction” if you provide substantive individual responses to students within a week, and your students have the opportunity to respond to your comments.

The group feature in Canvas can be used to create group exercises and discussions. You can assign the students in your course to particular groups, and either allow or disallow other students to see their interactions. Groups restricted to certain students are appropriate for competitive projects such as debates, or to provide a “meeting place” for other projects without the rest of the class “listening in.” For instance, you could assign separate groups to brainstorm about a particular topic, then host a course-wide discussion to evaluate and summarize the results from all the groups.

If you use tools that are outside of Canvas such as videos or quizzes from a textbook publisher, you should provide access to these resources within your FRC Canvas course area. This will provide students one place to go to find resources, and it will help you track student participation.

## **Verifying Your Students’ Identity**

State and Federal guidelines require that you make a reasonable effort to verify that the person who is actually doing online work is the student who is registered. There are some strategies that can discourage other people from doing work for your students, and ways to detect if different people are responding to online assignments.

Part of the problem can be resolved just through “regular and effective contact.” Individual contact between the instructor and the students makes it more difficult for students to falsify their identity. Live interaction, even if it is just text in a chat room, provides opportunities to verify you are consistently interacting with the same person. For instance, you could ask questions about their earlier work or interactions, or even provide “security questions” that students are periodically asked like “What was your high school mascot?” or “What was the name of your first pet?” Consider assigning multiple short essay assignments and compare them for consistent content and style. Creating assignments that incorporate material from your particular course or that builds on the student’s earlier work also make it harder for other people besides your student to write responses, or for your student to plagiarize.

## Submitting Grades

Faculty submit their final course grades through the MyFRC system, the same system where you view your official rosters (referred to as “Banner” which is the name of the software). At the end of the semester you will see a link for submitting final grades enabled in the area where you view your roster. The Canvas grade book is not connected to this system. See the Faculty Handbook for details about submitting grades into Banner, or contact the Admissions and Records Office if you have questions.

It is a good idea to back up your grades from your Canvas course, and downloading your grades allows you to open them in an Excel spreadsheet to make adjustments or further calculations. Downloading your grades is simple and fast. Just click on “Grades” in the menu on the left of your course area. Then click on “Export” on the upper left of the gradebook display.

Be sure you understand the results that you see in the Canvas grade book. Often the default grade report in Canvas will just show grades for the completed assignments, not the grade for the entire course. So a student who hasn’t completed half the assignments of the course but received a B on the assignments they did complete, may be shown to have a current final grade of a B. You can change the way grades are viewed by clicking on the settings icon on the gradebook page

All activities designed to be graded are added to your gradebook automatically. You can also manually add graded items, and manually adjust grades that are automatically calculated.

## Backing Up Your Course

It is recommended that you back up your course at least at the end of the semester. Canvas does keep course files that can be restored even if the course is “deleted.” However, for convenience and to have your own files you can back up your course content. You’ll see the link for doing this on the right after you enter a course and select “Settings” from the main menu on the left. This is also a good idea if you want to move material to another system.

You will need to save your grades separately. Exporting the content of your course does not back up student records.



## Appendix A: Authorization to Access Online Courses

From FRC DE Plan

Certain members of the FRC community, by virtue of responsibility and duties, are granted access to online course areas (fully Distance Education or Hybrid courses) for review, evaluation, and/or technical support. This document identifies those FRC community members.

### Faculty

- Members of Tenure or other Performance Evaluation teams assigned to perform course observations

### Staff

- System Administrators and Technical Support
- Distance Education Coordinator
- DSP&S representative

### Administrators

- The CIO
- The President

### Other Positions

- Official external agency or organization members such as visiting ACCJC team members

## Appendix B: FRC Distance Education Standards Checklist

### From the FRC DE Plan

**I. Syllabus and Introduction:** This information should be prominently posted and/or distributed by the beginning of the course, typically displayed in the top area of the course home page. The document/s should be in PDF format.

\_\_\_ **Syllabus:** The syllabus provides the information recommended in the Feather River College Syllabus Standards relevant for hybrid or online courses.

\_\_\_ **Participation:** The syllabus explains that online “participation” is defined as online student interaction in which the student submits a response to material or an activity, not just entrance to the online course area or read-only access to material.

\_\_\_ **First Two Weeks Participation is Required and Verified:** A prominent notice is posted indicating that the student must participate in the class by the end of the second week and demonstrate student readiness or the instructor may drop the student.

\_\_\_ **Special Software and/or Hardware:** Students are advised about any special software or hardware requirements for the course.

\_\_\_ **Challenges for Online Students:** Students are advised about the special challenges of online courses such as time management and scheduling uninterrupted study time

\_\_\_ **Course Structure Overview:** The general structure and pacing of the course requirements is explained. It is recommended that weeks or course sections follow a regular pattern such as readings or research, a quiz, a forum response, and a short individual essay. Estimate the time that typical assignments will take for the average student.

\_\_\_ **Technical Support:** Students should be directed to online help files and/or tutorials, and provided contact information for technical support for Canvas and email problems. For courses using a publisher-supplied website, provide the publisher technical support information as well as FRC technical support information.

### II. Instructional Design

\_\_\_ The course uses the college’s LMS as a central point of contact.

\_\_\_ Spelling and grammar are correct

\_\_\_ Course material is clearly organized into sequenced steps and/or topics

\_\_\_ Pacing of assignments is consistent and appropriate

\_\_\_ Accessibility for the vision and hearing impaired has been accommodated when reasonably possible

\_\_\_ Instructional materials are carefully prepared and effectively presented

\_\_\_ Instructional resources effectively address different learning styles

\_\_\_ Instructions for assignments are clear

\_\_\_ Criteria used for the assignment of assignments are clear, e.g., the use of grading rubrics

### **III. Communication and Interaction**

\_\_\_ Regular and effective means of interactive communication with the students are employed through some combination of forums, feedback on assignments, email, chat, virtual office hours)

\_\_\_ Grading and other feedback are timely

\_\_\_ Communication with students shows sensitivity to diversity and varied learning needs

\_\_\_ Student-Student communication is fostered

\_\_\_ Student-Student communication is managed effectively

### **IV. Outcomes, Course, and Instructor Assessment**

\_\_\_ Student Learning Outcomes as described in the Course Outline of Record are assessed

\_\_\_ Student satisfaction with the learning materials and course design is assessed

\_\_\_ Student satisfaction with the instructor and instructor feedback is assessed

## Appendix C: Distance Education Resources

[Best Practices in Distance Education](#) by the Association for Distance Education and Independent Learning

<http://www.adeil.org/?q=node/75>

### Distance Education Resources at the California Community College Website

#### Programs and Services

- [@One](#)
- [California Virtual Campus](#) (CVC)
- [Distance Education Captioning and Transcription Grant](#) (DECT) (CCC Live Caption)
- [3CMedia Solutions](#)
- [Distance Education Information Modules](#) (DEC Online)
- [High Tech Training Center at DeAnza Community College](#)(Accessibility Issues)

#### Regulations and Guidelines

- [Distance Education Guidelines Memorandum](#) ~ August 2008
- [Distance Education Guidelines](#) ~ 2008 Omnibus Version
- [Distance Education Access Guidelines for Students with Disabilities](#)~ Issued January 2011

### [Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education](#)

[http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Guide\\_to\\_Evaluating\\_DE\\_and\\_CE\\_2013.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Guide_to_Evaluating_DE_and_CE_2013.pdf)

This manual is published by the ACCJC, the accrediting commission for colleges and universities in our region. It provides details about best practices as well as regulations.

### [International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning](#)

<http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl>

This journal contains many articles on distance education theory and practice.

### [Canvas News Tutorials](#)

<http://www.Canvasnews.com/2012/27-Canvas-tutorials-on-youtube/>

This portion of the Canvas News website contains links to many Canvas tutorial videos on YouTube.com

### [National Education Association Online Learning Resources](#)

Links to research, guides, and tools

### **OpenOffice** <http://www.openoffice.org/>

This is a free alternative to Microsoft Office suite. It can read Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and many other file formats. You must save files in the Microsoft file format to share them with MS Office users.

### [Turnitin Tutorials](#)

[http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/training/instructor-training](http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/instructor-training)

### [Viewers for Microsoft Office Files](#)

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/search/DownloadResults.aspx?q=Office+viewers&First=1&ftfreeandpaid=Free&ftapplicableproducts=Office>

### [W#C Web Accessibility Initiative](#) <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

This site provides detailed information about accessibility best practices and guidelines.