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Definition of Distance Education

Distance Education is defined by Title 5 Section 55200 as

§55200. Definition and Application. "distance education" means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) either synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include:

> (1) The internet;
>
> (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
>
> (3) Audio conference; or
>
> (4) Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.
>
> (b) The definition of "distance education" does not include correspondence courses.

(c) "Accessible" means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.

§55202. Course Quality Standards. The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a class conducted through distance education as are applied to in-person classes, in regard to the course quality judgment made pursuant to the requirements of section 55002, and in regard to any local course quality determination or review process. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full involvement of faculty in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2 (commencing with section 53200) of chapter 2.

§55204. Instructor Contact. In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

(a) Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular and substantive interaction between the instructor(s) and students, (and among students, if described in the course outline of record or distance education addendum), either synchronously or asynchronously, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.

(b) "Substantive interaction" means engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following:

> (1) Providing direct instruction;
>
> (2) Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;

(3) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;

(4) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or

(5) Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.

(c) Regular interaction between a student and instructor(s) is ensured by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency:

(1) Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and

(2) Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

(d) Regular and substantive interaction is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.

(e) For purposes of calculating instructional time in the context of asynchronous distance education, a week of instructional time is any week in which:

(1) The institution makes available the instructional materials, other resources, and instructor support necessary for academic engagement and completion of course objectives; and

(2) The institution expects enrolled students to perform educational activities demonstrating academic engagement during the week.

§55206. Separate Course Approval. (a) If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, the course outline of record or an addendum to the official course outline of record shall address how course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode and how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirement for regular and substantive interaction as specified in section 55204.

(b) The course design and all course materials must be accessible to every student, including students with disabilities. The distance education course outline of record or addendum shall be approved according to the district's adopted curriculum approval procedures.

§55208. Faculty Selection and Workload. (a) Instructors of course sections delivered via distance education are individuals responsible for delivering course content who meet the qualifications for instruction established by an institution's accrediting agency. Instructors shall be selected by the same procedures used to determine all instructional assignments. Instructors shall possess the minimum qualifications for the discipline into which the course's subject matter most appropriately falls, in accordance with article 2 (commencing with section 53410) of subchapter 4 of chapter 4, and with the list of discipline definitions and requirements adopted by the Board of Governors to implement that article, as such list may be amended from time to time.

(b) Instructors of distance education shall be prepared to teach in a distance education delivery method consistent with the requirements of this article, local district policies, and negotiated agreements.

(c) The number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance education shall be determined by and be consistent with other district procedures related to faculty assignment. Procedures for determining the number of students assigned to a course section offered in whole or in part by distance education may include a review by the curriculum committee established pursuant to section 55002(a)(1).

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impinge upon or detract from any negotiations or negotiated agreements between exclusive representatives and district governing boards.

Mission of the Madera Community College Distance Education Program

The mission of the Distance Education (DE) program is to facilitate student success by offering high quality, accessible online, hybrid and web-enhanced courses, to promote effective student/instructor contact in these courses, to provide online student support services and to ensure that courses are ADA compliant. This is in alignment with MCC's Mission of "Empowering our students to succeed in an ever-changing world."

By offering instructor training and support in both online course delivery and application of high-quality technological resources, the DE program strives for excellence and currency in online, hybrid, and 2-way live interactive courses. By providing high quality online courses, we offer students opportunities to change their lives, strengthen their communities and engage in careers that will not only bolster their own lives but the lives of their families. Through online education, students can attain degrees, certificates and prepare for transfer.

History of the Madera Community College Distance Education Program

Madera Community College's Distance Education program was initially developed under the Reedley College Distance Education program. In 2020, Madera Community Center advanced from candidacy as an autonomous college and was granted full accreditation status in Summer 2020; this document, then, refers to the Madera Community College (MCC), and the Madera Community College @ Oakhurst (MCC@OC).

Based on the district-wide adoption of Microsoft Office, including an e-mail client for administration, faculty, staff, and eventually lead to the district-wide issuance of student e-mail addresses; and then a district-wide adoption of Blackboard as the Learning Management System which moved to the adoption of Canvas, Madera Community College was poised to provide distance education. The College then adopted the use of distance education software Impatica, then Tegrity, then PolyCom and now the College has added Zoom to facilitate its 2-Way Live interaction sections and most recently, the College adopted screen recording software Camtasia, Relay/Knowmia and now Panopto for faculty and staff to use to create content materials.

In 2020, the Madera Community College Distance Education Committee was established by the Academic Senate to oversee the Distance Education program at MCC and MCC@OC. Distance education guidelines were written and adopted in 2021 by the Academic Senate. Those guidelines will be reviewed in conjunction with this plan on a four-year cycle. (See Appendix A.)

Madera Community College Distance Education Program Status

Madera Community College Distance Education program has expanded its distance education offerings (381 courses are approved for fully online, 352 courses approved for hybrid, 275 courses approved for 2-way live instruction, 156 courses approved for Emergency Only Fully Online (FOMA), 46 courses approved for Emergency Only Partially Online (POMA), and nine courses have no distance education approval). The future focus of the DE program, is to move the college forward with the California Virtual Campus - Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI exchange).

The Madera Community College Distance Education program regularly undergoes a review of curriculum as part of the update within the course outline of record. As part of the program review, DE offerings, policies, procedures, as well as past practices are evaluated.

Definitions of Madera Community College Distance Education Courses

Defining the distinct types of distance education classes can sometimes create confusion on the part of all constituencies (administration, faculty, staff, students, and community) since the definitions of online and hybrid courses have not always been treated consistently depending on context (state reporting, curriculum, contract).

 MCC defines distance education modalities as follows:

Face to Face (Location Code: MCC and MCC @ OC or OC): all instruction is done face to face in a classroom.

Fully Online (Location Code: MWEB and OCWEB): all instruction is online.
- Asynchronous - online learning allows students to view instructional materials each week at any time they choose and does not include a live video lecture component (Location identified as 100% Online, Instructional Method listed as Lec Internet, and Meeting Information is listed with LECDI).
- Synchronous - refers to an online learning event in which a group of participants are engaged in learning at the same time using some sort of technology intermediary i.e., live Zoom sessions (Location identified as 100% Online, Instructional Method listed as LEC Simultaneous Internet, and Meeting Information is listed with LECSI with the meeting days and times listed).

Hybrid (Location Code: MHYB and OCHYB)**:** 1-99% of the class is online.
- Hybrid - Partially Online (PO): online instruction with scheduled on-campus meetings and/or assessments conducted via synchronous meeting (Location identified as Hybrid, Instructional Method listed as LEC Internet and LECT or Lab that is face to face, and Meeting Information is listed with LEC with the meeting days and times listed).
- Hybrid - Online with Flexible in-person component (OFI): online instruction with in-person/proctored assessment/activities at a flexible time and place. Whenever an online, partially online or OFI section requires an activity that cannot be completed online or asynchronously, that requirement should be noted in the schedule of classes. For example, if you are teaching an Art History class and you ask a student to visit an Art Gallery at some point in the semester (Location identified as Hybrid, Instructional Method listed as LEC Internet and LECT or Lab that is face to face, and Meeting Information is listed with LEC with the meeting days and times listed).

2-way Live: This definition is used internally, **meeting at multiple locations using technology** to facilitate the class at various locations. This DE addendum is applicable only when the college locations are open or using video conferencing technology such as Zoom. (The face to face section is identified as indicated above and the online synchronous section is identified as indicated above).

Emergency Only Designation
- Fully Online with Mutual Agreement (Location Code: MWEM) - Emergency Only: distance education request can only to be used in case of emergency (e.g., science labs) whether synchronous or asynchronous (Location identified as 100% Online Special).
- Partially Online with Mutual Agreement (Location Code: MHEM) – Emergency Only: distance education as hybrid request can only be used in case of an emergency (e.g., lecture component moves online and components that cannot move online such as welding practice since this is hands on and requires equipment, etc.) (Location identified as Hybrid Special).

Emergency Declaration: For purposes of activating the "emergency-only" distance education addenda, "emergency" is defined as all situations in which human-made or natural disasters, disrupt, deny, hinder progress in or delay education. The college president, SCCCD Chancellor, CCCCO Chancellor, or other government agencies and their affiliates can declare an emergency and can end the emergency declaration.

Organizational Structure

The following individuals serve on the Madera Community College Distance Education Committee in the following capacities:

- Vice-President of Learning and Student Services, Madera Community College: Supervises the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator and, is responsible for the administration of the Distance Education program as part of the larger Office of Instruction.

- Faculty Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator: Serves as liaison between faculty and administration in distance education matters, leads planning efforts for distance education professional development, chairs the Distance Education Committee and reviews and makes recommendations to the Curriculum Committee as needed. Assists faculty with a variety of technical and pedagogical matters related to DE.

- Director of Technology: Provides leadership in collaboration with the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator in all areas related to technology (hardware, software, networking, new purchase, maintenance, replacement, and repair) for campus sites within the district. Works cooperatively with counterparts at SCCCD.

- IT Director: provides leadership in collaboration with the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator in similar areas as the Director of Technology – at a local college level.

Support Services and Training Provided by the College:

Student Services
- Counseling/Advising (available online)
- Application and Registration (District and College websites)
- Student Orientation (online)

Learning Resource Centers
- Learning Centers (utilizing 24/7 tutoring featuring Smarthinking)
- Supplemental Instruction (Beyond the Classroom)
- Library Online Services (Access to the library catalog, eBooks, electronic databases and resources, and librarian research and instructional support.

Business Services
- Bookstore - Follett (online ordering)

DSPS Department
- Accessibility Review and Assistance
- Captioning Assistance

College Committees
- Professional Development
- Distance Education (DE)
- Technology Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Curriculum Committee

- Guided Pathways

Other Support
- Professional Development

Program and Course Development Process

The Madera Community College Distance Education Guidelines (Appendix A) indicate the following reasons for developing, approving, and offering an online course:

- Reaching students for whom attendance at a regular MCC/ MCC@OC onsite is less suitable.
- Providing specialty courses for students at one or more sites, where there is not a sufficient pool of students to warrant traditional classroom instruction.
- Recruiting and supporting students who would not otherwise have initial access to onsite classes
- Serving the community and business institutions by providing work-site courses for external organizations requiring special training.

A DE addendum submitted to the Curriculum Committee must fully identify how methods of instruction have been adapted for online delivery and what strategies will be employed to ensure regular and substantive interaction as required in Title 5.

Faculty wishing to adapt a course to have a distance education addendum should seek consultation with their faculty peers, dean, and Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator. A distance education addendum must be reviewed and approved through the curriculum process before a new distance education course can be offered for online delivery.

Faculty members developing distance education course(s) are strongly encouraged to work in tandem with other experienced distance education faculty and/or the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator. Throughout the development process, faculty should collaborate with one another to ensure best practices and to share insights into both the technology and the pedagogical considerations of converting a face-to-face course for online delivery. Several checklists or rubrics (i.e. CVC-OEI rubric) exist for assisting faculty in this critical endeavor. Since moving from the traditional classroom to a virtual classroom is not as simple as merely putting existing course notes and readings online, faculty should critically evaluate their online course to ensure that opportunities have been created for active, student-centered learning. It is strongly suggested that faculty members developing DE course use the CVC-OEI Rubric as a means of evaluating the design of their course.

Distance Education Practices

Institutional Support:

State Center Community College District and/or Madera Community College is responsible for providing the following:
1. Funding for the LMS (Canvas).
2. Funding for a 24/7 monitoring of all technical systems related to online program delivery.
3. Consistently offer comprehensive training for faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as face to face and web-based tutorial assistance with the Canvas learning management system and help desk support. (See Action Item #1)

4. Orientation and readiness material for students are available prior to their enrolling in DE courses (which remain available for the balance of the course term) as well as 24/7 help desk support for Canvas use. CVC-OEI, in conjunction with 3CMedia, developed a [series of modules for students](#). (Action Item #4)
5. Instructional design support for faculty developers. (See Action Items #1,7.)
6. Student support services at a distance, including library, counseling, bookstore, orientation, and tutoring, and enrollment services**.**
7. Easily accessible schedule and catalog copy for students seeking distance-learning opportunities.
8. Support for course development and delivery, accessibility training. (See Action Item #6 and #8.)
9. Appropriate substantive change report to the ACCJC when programs reach the ability to offer 50% or more of their degree or certificates via distance education.

Student Integrity and Authentication

1. Students access the Learning Management System, (LMS), through a college administered authentication process (student ID related password protection).
2. Password updates take place on a regular basis via a password aging policy.
3. Instructors are encouraged to use [multiple methods of assessment in their course design](#).
4. Assessment, grading and interactive activities will take place within an authenticated, copyright appropriate, and Section 508 compliant environment. (See Action Item #6.)
5. Instructors will monitor students' continuous active participation in the course. **(**Appendix A)
6. To protect the integrity of the teaching/learning process in courses that do not feature a proctored test environment, the students may be required to acknowledge Madera Community College's Student Conduct Standards.
7. Instructors are encouraged to define academic dishonesty and plagiarism in their online class syllabus. Instructors are encouraged to also reference the Academic Dishonesty section of the College Catalog.

Faculty Readiness

To ensure quality and appropriate rigor, faculty electing to teach online classes should have training in online pedagogy and the use of Canvas. To teach a course in the Distance Education program or to design a new online course, the faculty member should—

1. Have received appropriate training/certification in online teaching, such as that provided by @ONE (an extensive multi week comprehensive certification) (see Appendix C), or another approved or accredited program, or
2. Have received appropriate training/certification in online teaching, such as the 8-week certification training provided by the Distance Education Coordinator/Instructional Designer, or
3. The faculty member must then seek approval from the relevant division Dean to teach an online course.

Teaching and Learning

To develop quality distance education courses, in coordination with the Curriculum Committee, the following standards will be applied.

1. All distance education classes will follow the approved course outline of record.
2. Distance education students will be given information about course requirements, expectations regarding course work standards, equipment needs, and techniques for succeeding in a distance education environment at least five days in advance of the start of the course. Technical training and support will be available throughout

the course via the Canvas portal, MCC/OCC Online page, and within individual courses (syllabi, etc.). However, not all technical support can be provided – as so many tools are available in online teaching and learning.

3. Courses will provide ample written, audio and / or video instructions for consideration to each task the student must perform taking tests or quizzes, posting contributions to the on-line discussion, finding supplementary reading, returning to the website, etc.

4. Faculty will motivate students to be active learners in presenting, organizing, applying, and constructing information, ideas, and knowledge. Faculty will effectively use various forms of communication to engage and inform students.

5. Students and faculty are prepared and expected to participate in collaborative activities throughout the length of their course of study.

6. All course objectives, Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and course requirements will be presented clearly in each course, following the course COR.

7. Students receive clear instructions to save and retain copies of all work submitted electronically.

8. Instructors will back-up all grade book data.

9. Courses will provide opportunities for regular and substantive interaction between teacher and students, among students, and between students and the learning environment (Regular and Substantive Interactions). Students are held accountable for the communication activities within courses. Instructors will initiate contact with all students. (See Appendix A.)

10. All student assignments and their due dates, as well as tests and test dates, will be explained and posted at the beginning of the course, or in a way to give reasonable preparation time for the student.

11. Any special testing (i.e., proctoring) and laboratory situations and/or arrangements will be clearly described to the student in the syllabus and announcements area of the course. Fully asynchronous online courses do not require the students to come to a Madera Community College site for any reason. Hybrid courses must inform students of specific dates and times when on/off campus meetings are required through the syllabus, Self-Service, and the printed Schedule of Courses.

12. Course design will address multiple learning styles of students.

13. Student assessment and evaluation methods will be relevant to the activities, reading assignments, and other learning materials presented in the course.

14. Instructor feedback on student assignments and questions will be constructive and provided in a timely manner. Instructors will clearly define feedback response time in the course syllabus.

15. A policy regarding deadlines in the case of technical difficulties will be communicated in the syllabus or overview of the course.

16. Faculty will post cheating and plagiarism policies in the online syllabus.

17. Course Media and Materials Standards will be posted in the syllabus.

18. All external links and internal functionality of distance education courses will be available and operational when the class starts.

19. The course content will be kept current term by term and will open on the date listed for the start of the semester and remain open at least until the closing date of the course as listed in the schedule. Faculty will have the option to open their courses 1 week prior to the start of the semester and have the courses open 1 week after.

20. Technology will be appropriate to the course pedagogy.

21. The course syllabus will model the checklist available in the Madera Community College Syllabus Checklist the course contents will adhere to the course outline of record.

Other Considerations:

1. Distance education courses that have student(s) with a recognized disability will work with the DSP&S office to ensure that necessary accommodations are made.
Images and links contained in the course website must show alternate text upon cursor contact. Presentations employing audio files must be captioned (captioning services are available through the DECT captioning grant). It is the faculty member's responsibility to ensure accessibility. (See Action Item #7)
2. Distance education students have access to sufficient library resources that may include a "virtual library" accessible through the Web.
3. Academic counseling and advising will continue to be available to distance learning students at the same level as it is for students in on-campus environments.
4. Procedures are in place to help ensure the security of student work. Privacy and Protection Standards from FERPA are followed, particularly when directing students to resources that are outside of the college controlled LMS.

Student Support

1. All students will have 24/7 access to the Canvas Learning Management System.
2. Distance education students will have the same access to both academic and student services resources similar to traditional students.
3. Distance education students will have access to "ask a librarian" and online research databases.
4. All courses have Canvas course shells that are populated at the time of enrollment through the Datatel system.
5. Assistance for students who need help with Canvas is provided by a 24/7 help desk support is also provided as outsourced to the Canvas Helpdesk and the District supported Student Help.
6. Canvas Help link provides assistance and information for students about accessing Canvas, course schedules, orientations, help desk and all other virtual support services. (See Action Item #4.)
7. Supplemental Instruction opportunities are available to distance education students. A Canvas self-paced course: Canvas Student Orientation takes students through the basics of Canvas and details what it means to be an online student.
8. Integration of 24/7 Smarthinking online Tutoring – available through the Canvas Environment. This would support Guided Pathways for Staying on the Path and Ensuring Learning.
9. Readiness information for students wanting to become distance education students will be available in the form of information and readiness tests for self-evaluation.

Department or Discipline Specific

1. The course adheres to the integrated Course Outline of Record and is the virtual equivalent to the face-to-face course.
2. The course is offered with rigor, depth, and breadth consistent with its face-to-face counterpart.
3. It is the responsibility of the discipline/department to maintain the quality of delivery of all classes offered regardless of modality.
4. Student learning meets the standards set within the discipline, especially within sequenced and/or transfer courses.

Faculty teaching in distance education modalities will have met minimum qualifications for the discipline, have been approved by the appropriate discipline administrator, and have met the Madera Community College Readiness Standards for DE Faculty. This is also described in § 55208. Faculty Selection and Workload**.**

Other Faculty-Related Items

General Recommendations:

This plan allows faculty members to grow into distance education at their own pace and comfort level. The administration has assured Academic Senate and SCCCD bargaining unit SCFT Local 1533 that no faculty member will be penalized for not offering distance education courses or forced to convert courses to the online environment. One priority of the College will be to look for ideal candidates for new faculty hires who are willing and/or able to incorporate technology resources into their teaching and learning. Current faculty members are given the opportunity to offer courses at a distance based on the need for discipline and as identified earlier in this plan.

In accordance with Title 5 guidelines, which designate online and partially online courses as equivalent in credit status with regular courses, the Administration and Faculty of Madera Community College, consider distance education courses the same in content and credit as regular courses.

Classroom Visitation Protocol for Online Courses:

Background: Instructional administrators also have the responsibility to ensure that classes are meeting as posted in the schedule of classes and that the instructor is providing the instruction agreed upon as contracted.

Visitation of online courses may occur by the division dean and/or the department chair (with the limitation and constraints of the SCFT Local 1533 Guidance):

1. To ensure that the course is appropriately available to students in the learning management system.
2. Outside of the regular classroom evaluation process, administration will follow SCFT Local 1533 guidance on when they can get access to a course.
3. In response to a request from the instructor on the course. (Questionable student conduct, technical problems, course development review, and recommendation, etc.).

The above processes would be under the negotiated processes between the SCCCD District and the Union Member Leadership/Union Contract.

Madera Community College Distance Education Program Goals

Madera Community College's commitment to maintaining viable and quality Distance Education offerings is a logical extension of those goals articulated in the Strategic Plan for State Center Community College District and in the Madera Community College Educational Master Plan. These goals and consequent action items will be reviewed and examined as part of the Distance Education Committee's ongoing review of the program and formal analysis of achievement or deficiency will be accomplished as part of the bi-annual review of this plan.

Expanding Service:

1. Encourage greater breadth of distance education offerings, with special attention to AA/AS degree requirements and CSU/UC General Education requirements. (MCC Strategic Plan: Directions 1, 2.1, 3.1, and 3.2)
2. Create a clearer, more accessible pathway for online matriculation. (MCC SP 2, 2.2)
3. Increase student retention and success rates of distance education courses for parity with face-to-face classes. (MCC SP 1.3, 1.4, 2, 2.3, and 4)

Ensuring Integrity

1. Improve faculty participation in on-site distance education workshops and/or off-site professional development programs such as those offered by @ONE. (MCC SP 3.3)
2. Review requirements for student authentication in fully online classes. (MCC SP 2.4)
3. Ensure that all classes (F2F and DE) employing online presentations and materials are accessible and ADA compliant. (MCC SP 2.3 and 2.4)

Action Items

1. Institute regular monthly "topics" workshops in pedagogy, course design, and/or technology adapted for pedagogical needs. (ongoing)
2. Develop distance education resources for use within the course for Distance Education program review purposes, focusing on the Guided Pathways Pillars. (Currently in use, FA2021)
3. Continue to develop the teacher's toolbox, a canvas shell for instructors that contains tools for instruction, best practices, and technical assistance.
4. Work with department chairs and discipline experts to fill the gaps in degree/GE patterns (Ongoing)
5. Analyze the instructional quality between face-to-face and online courses and make recommendations to faculty and departments. This work would be in collaboration with the SLO evaluation process. The rubric for this process is yet to be developed in collaboration with the Faculty Union. (Ongoing)
6. Ensure ADA Section 508 compliance (accessibility) for all Madera Community College DE courses and appropriate copyright acknowledgement through workshops and faculty requested analysis and feedback. (Ongoing)
7. Begin to discuss increased security and safe test taking for online classes including appropriate methods for student authentication, equity and accessibility development, and specific sites and protocols for proctoring.
8. Forward recommendations regarding the structure and oversight of the Madera Community College Distance Education program to the Madera Community College Council by the end of FA2021.

Accomplishments

Madera Community College has in place 95% full-time faculty online trained in best practices for teaching online. This training is provided by the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator. The online certification course is roughly an 8-week program (45 hours). Faculty learn best practices for online teaching and learning as well as develop three individual learning modules that focus on an introductory module, and two completed modules deep into their course (beyond week 3). These modules are evaluated using the CVC-OEI rubric for areas A-D.

MCC DISTANCE EDUCATION GUIDELINES

Approved by the MCC Distance Education Committee and forwarded to the MCC Academic Senate **Fall 2021** Further revised on **Fall 2021** in consultation with MCC DE Committee Chair, **Spring 2022. This plan will be reviewed every 4 (four) years or as necessary.**

A. Definition:

Distance Education is defined by Title 5 Section 55200 as:

§55200. Definition and Application. "distance education" means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) either synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include:

(1) The internet;

(2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;

(3) Audio conference; or

(4) Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.

(b) The definition of "distance education" does not include correspondence courses.

(c) "Accessible" means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.

A. Purpose:

1. Distance education is used to provide students with alternative access to educational opportunities.
2. Distance education may be used but is not limited to,
   - reaching students for whom attendance at a regular District site is less suitable;
   - providing specialty courses for students at one or more sites, where there is not a sufficient pool of students to warrant traditional classroom instruction;
   - recruiting and supporting students who would not otherwise have initial access to the District;
   - serving the community and business institutions by providing work-site courses for external organizations requiring special training.

B. Quality:

1. The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses.
2. The same availability of student support service quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional student support services.

3. Regular curriculum review of a distance education course shall occur every two years as per program review and with the same frequency and scope as that of traditional face-to-face courses.

4. Evaluations of faculty teaching distance education courses shall include student, faculty, and administrative evaluations following faculty [contract](#) and union guidelines. The evaluation will consider factors unique to the distance education delivery system. (Appendix B). The discipline faculty shall decide what distance education course format is best to ensure quality of the course. If students in a distance education course are consistently performing at a significantly lower level (retention/success) than the corresponding face-to-face course, the discipline shall consider changing the distance education course format and/or working with the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator to seek guidance on instructional techniques / support that could be implemented to help online student retention / success, or lastly, discontinuing the distance education offering of the course.

5. Assessments in a course offered through distance education shall abide by the generally accepted standards and practices on Internet Plagiarism.

6. A course taught through distance education shall authenticate all identities of the students participating in the course.

7. Courses taught by distance education shall follow accessibility requirements as per the ADA.

C. Courses:
1. Courses taught through distance education shall be selected by the discipline faculty within the department based on the appropriateness of a particular course for that curriculum committee approval and ECPC review. If a substantial change to the approved distance education format is proposed, the course must be resubmitted to the curriculum committee for approval. The curriculum approved course would then go to the Board of Trustees for SCCCD for ultimate approval.

2. Departments shall strive to offer as many of their courses through distance education where the quality can be maintained in order to expand access to students.

3. Preference for multiple offerings of a course currently offered through distance education shall occur only when the course exhibits comparative success and retention rates to the face-to-face sections, in addition to student demand for such courses.

D. Instruction:
1. Instructors shall be selected by the procedures used to determine all instructional assignments as per [contract](#). (Title V)

2. Instructors shall have appropriate training in the techniques of effective distance education instruction before teaching a distance education class. The DE Coordinator and/or Instructional Designer shall determine the appropriateness of the training and preparedness of the instructor. The appropriate training is reported to the Dean of the Discipline for course assignment.

3. For any course delivered through distance education, instruction shall include regular and substantive personal contact between instructor to student, student to instructor and student to students through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact hours, Web- based communications, or other person-to-person activities as described in the MCC Distance Education Plan (related to Title V 55376).

E. Workload/Class Size
1. If any additional compensation and/or load factor and/or released time provided for the additional time required for a distance education course assignment shall be determined by faculty union contract

(Agreement for Fiscal Years July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021 Between State Center Community College District and State Center Federation of Teachers, Local 1533, CFT/AFT, AFL-CIO

2. The determination of the number of students assigned to a distance education course section shall be guided by what class size best contributes to educational quality and reasonable faculty workload, that determination to be made by the discipline experts within the department in which the course resides in consultation with the administration. These guidelines are identified in the Course Outline of Record and mirror face-to-face offerings.

F. Institutional Support
1. Technical support will be provided in a timely, effective manner for all distance education courses to free instructors to teach most effectively.
2. Enrolled students shall have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support their learning and assess their progress.
3. Instructors of distance education courses shall be encouraged to attend distance education workshops and seminars and to visit other districts with distance education programs, with expenses reimbursed through staff development funds.

G. Intellectual Property Rights
See Section XIX, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, Page 93, of the "Agreement for Fiscal Years July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021 Between State Center Community College District and State Center Federation of Teachers, Local 1533, CFT/AFT, AFL-CIO."

H. Periodic Review
1. A review of the Distance Education Guidelines and of the distance learning program in general shall be conducted by the campus committees annually, or semi-annually if warranted. (See Title 5, Section 55317).
2. In reviewing and evaluating the guidelines and program, the Distance Education Committee shall seek input from faculty at large, faculty teaching distance education courses, students taking distance education courses, administrators, department chairs, curriculum committees, academic senates, and the SCFT.

Madera Community College Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy

All DE courses at Madera Community College, regardless of the online modality will include regular and substantive interaction as described below:

- Initiated interaction: Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. Providing students with an open-ended forum for questions about course assignments, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor-initiated interaction.
- Frequency: Distance education courses are considered the "virtual equivalent" to face-to-face courses. Therefore, the frequency of contact between instructor and students will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, face-to-face course. At the very least, the number of instructor contact hours per week that would be available for face-to-face students will also be available, in asynchronous and/or synchronous mode, with students in the DE format. Contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure that regular contact is maintained, given the nature of asynchronous instructional methodologies, over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the course and comparable to face-to-face course offerings of the same class.
- Establishing expectations and managing unexpected instructor absence: A policy describing the frequency and timeliness of instructor-initiated contact and instructor feedback, will be posted in the syllabus and/or other course documents that are made available for students when the course officially opens each semester. If the instructor must be out of contact briefly for an unexpected reason (such as illness or a family emergency that takes the instructor offline), notification to students will be made in the announcements area of the course and/or a group email that includes when the students can expect regular effective contact to resume. If the offline time results in a lengthy absence (i.e., more than three or four days) a substitute instructor should be sought who can assist students while the instructor is unavailable. The instructor should contact her/his department chair or dean immediately to work on appropriate faculty substitution

Types of Substantive Interaction:

Regarding the type of contact that will exist in all Madera Community College distance education courses, instructors will, at a minimum, use the following resources to initiate contact with students:

- General email
- Weekly announcements in the Learning Management System
- Threaded discussion forums (or other forms of student-instructor interactions, such as blog posts, journal entries, and/or wiki activities) with appropriate instructor participation.
- Timely feedback for student work (i.e., personalized notes in comments for each assignment, use of detailed rubrics)
- Instructor prepared e-lectures or introductions in the form of e-lectures to any publisher created materials (written, recorded, broadcast, etc.) that, combined with other course materials, creates the "virtual equivalent" of the face-to-face class.

Suggestions:

- Instructors should also choose to use other forms of communication, as mentioned in section 55204 of Title 5. ("…through group or individual meetings, orientation, and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail. e-mail, or other activities.") and/or video conference (Skype, Google Hangouts, Zoom, Teams), or other synchronous technologies may also be included.

- It is suggested that Instructors should have a threaded discussion that is set aside for general questions about the course and may wish to have weekly or other regularly scheduled question and answer sessions available to students, as well as regular interactive activities directly related to the content of the course.
- It is suggested that Instructors have mechanisms such as, discussion boards, Voice Threads, Zoom, Google Hangouts, etc. for student-to-student interaction and collaboration.

Faculty Online Observation

Madera Community College

Faculty Name:		Date:	
Course:		Location:	
Topic:		Evaluator:	

State Center Community College District

Category	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Not Observed	Not Applicable	Comments
PLANNING					
Online class site and content presented in an organized manner and is user-friendly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Curriculum logically progresses from one concept to the next.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES					
Announcements or other tools are used to communicate with the class regularly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Use of vocabulary is appropriate to content and class level.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Class materials are communicated in an effective and understandable manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
A class forum, threaded discussion or other means (IM chat, Skype, journals, blogs) is provided for students to communicate in "class discussions" or with instructor on a regular basis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Displays flexibility and respect for the ideas of others in discussion boards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Skillfully facilitates student participation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
PRESENTATION					
Demonstrates current knowledge of the subject.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Uses examples to clarify and illustrate concepts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Demonstrates through online interactions enthusiasm for and interest in the subject matter.	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Employs a variety of materials and techniques appropriate to varying abilities and backgrounds	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Provides alternatives (ie: illustrations, animations, audio, video, or PowerPoint presentations) for students who do not learn well through text-only instructional models.	☐	☐	☐	☐	

STUDENT RELATIONS					
Creates a feeling of genuine interest in student progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Summary Statement: Please address the following:

    1.   What specific strengths did you identify in this faculty?

    2.   Please list any specific changes recommended to strengthen this faculty's effectiveness.

    3.   List any other suggestions for improvement.

    4.   Other comments or suggestions.

Evaluator's Signature:

_____

The signature below indicates this observation has been discussed with me but does not constitute consent or agreement. I understand I may prepare a narrative statement to be attached to this document.

Faculty Member's Signature:

_____

Date:

_____

Proposed Madera Community College Readiness Standards for DE faculty

To ensure quality, campus certification for faculty teaching in a distance education format (either fully online or hybrid) must be achieved through the following means:

I. **Initial Training**
1. Prior verified distance education teaching experience. Dean, and DE Coordinator or DE Committee member should have reviewed a CV indicating the extent of that experience, conducted an interview regarding the instructor's preparedness, as well as having access and opportunity to review at least one course site; **or**
2. Verified satisfactory completion and/or certification from a recognized distance education training program (e.g., @ONE Online Teaching Certification Program); **or**
3. Attendance and completion of Madera Community College's Effective Practices for Online Teaching and Learning (see below) or equivalent.

II. **Continuing Education**
1. In the first semester of teaching a distance education course for Madera Community College, the DE instructor is recommended to attend the campus led online certification course.
2. During subsequent semesters, Madera Community College instructors are recommended to engage with the ongoing professional development opportunities provided by or recommended by the Instructional Designer.
3. Attendance at any training will be FLEX credit available.

Effective Practices for Online Teaching and Learning Training:

FLEX training:

All faculty are required to take the full eight-week training and is the requirement to teach online at MCC as detailed by the ASCCC. This training will be offered every semester and can be used as a starter course or a refresher for those in need of a tune-up/refresher. Any equivalent and documented training will also suffice and cover this requirement.

Topics covered:
1. Introduction to teaching in an online environment: what does it mean to teach at a distance?
2. Designing the most effective course: basing course design on objectives and student learning outcomes
3. Creating meaningful assessments
4. Working on the modalities: text, image, audio, video for content presentation
5. Regular and substantive interaction: communicating by any means possible 6. Accessibility issues: considering our audience

Eight-week Online Training

This specially targeted course in distance education pedagogy will be conducted during eight-week (45 hours) activity at various times during each semester and summer. It satisfies the campus verified previous online teaching experience or other forms of certification (e.g., @ONE).

This eight-week training will satisfy the current statewide requirements that are currently being devised through the Online Education Initiative, and instructors are encouraged to seek further training through @ONE or through the MCC Distance Education Office as part of their ongoing professional development This course will be designed to incorporate

pedagogical best practices as well as practical considerations regarding the use of LMS (Canvas) and peripheral applications. Compensation of any training will follow the Union faculty Contract.

Committee Operating Agreement Distance Education

Mission

The mission of the Distance Education Committee is to facilitate student success by offering high quality, accessible online, hybrid and web-enhanced courses, to promote effective student/instructor contact in these courses, to provide online student support services and to ensure that courses are ADA compliant. By offering instructor training and support in both online course delivery and application of high-quality technological resources. The Distance Education Committee strives for excellence and currency in online, hybrid, and live 2-way interactive courses.

Purpose
1. Develop, write, implement and evaluate policies and procedures related to:
    a. The development of and support for programs, degrees, and courses in distance education.
    b. Technical, administrative, and academic support to promote distance learner success.
    c. Technical, administrative, and professional support for faculty who teach distance education courses.
2. Develop, write, implement, and evaluate standards of proficiency that will is required to teach a distance education course.
3. Develop, write, implement, and evaluate outcomes and assessment measures of the distance education program.
4. Develop, write, evaluate, and update the college's Distance Education Plan.
5. Participate in the preparation of college accreditation self-evaluation as appropriate.
6. Provide an annual summary of Distance Education Committee activities to the College Council.

Jurisdiction

The Distance Education Committee shall report and make periodic recommendations to the Academic Senate, College Council, SCCCD Canvas Task Force, and SCCCD Technology Advisory Committee on all matters related to Distance Education under each constituency organization's purview (consistent with those of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Title 5, and the California Education Code).

Composition
1. The Committee will be composed of standing members, appointed members, and advisory members. The committee will have membership from instructional faculty, administration, classified professionals, and students. MCC Academic Senate Approval 3.13.2020
    a. It is recommended that instructional committee members must have previously taught a distance education course and/or are informed about distance education issues.
    b. It is recommended that classified professionals are familiar with technology used in distance education and/or are informed of technology use in distance education.
2. Voting members are appointed by their peers to serve two-year (staggered) terms.
    a. The voting members of the Committee:
        i. Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator (when hired) – 1
        ii. Student Services - 1
        iii. CTE, Health Sciences, Business / Science, Technology, Engineering, Math – 1
        iv. Composition, Literature, Languages / Social Sciences, Humanities, Fine Arts – 1

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    Faculty / Counselor representing Oakhurst (appointed by Academic Senate) – 1
    Adjunct Faculty (appointed by Academic Senate) – 1
    Computer & Technology Services – 1
    Laboratory Coordinator – 1
    Library – 1

3. Non-Voting members of the Committee shall serve in an Advisory role:
   a. Madera/Oakhurst Dean of Instruction (appointed by the college President) – 1
   b. Director of Technology -1
   c. Admissions, Records, and Classified Professionals -1
   d. Student Representative from Associated Student Government – 1

4. Committee Chair
   a. The chair of the committee is the Instructional Designer/Distance Education Coordinator (hired in Fall 2022).
      i. The chair is responsible for creating and setting up meeting agenda and notes.
      ii. The chair is responsible for updating the group on district-wide distance education / technology updates by attending SCCCD Canvas Task Force, and SCCCD Technology Advisory Committee and reporting back information or nominating a designee to attend. Attends California Community College Chancellor's Office and State Academic Senate California Community College meetings and reports back information or nominating a designee to attend.
      iii. Faculty members on the committee should also be able to represent or serve as a liaison with the following constituencies: Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, Madera/Oakhurst Technology Advisory Committee; District Technology Advisory Committee; and State Center Federation of Teachers. Representation of these groups is preferable, but not required

5. Other information:

   MCC Academic Senate Approval 3.13.2020
   a. Any change in the membership structure of the committee must be made in advance of the academic year in which the change is to occur and must be approved by all constituent groups.
   b. If a new academic division is created, it will be immediately entitled to representation within the committee.
   c. The Committee Operating Agreement will be reviewed at least every 2 years to ensure accuracy and relevance.

Meetings
The Distance Education Committee shall meet at least twice a semester as announced by the
chair during the academic year, with the goal of meeting monthly.

Quorum
The committee can only vote on issues with a quorum of at least 51% of its members.

College Goal
1. The DE Committee directly impacts the following goals:
   a. Continue progress in developing, implementing, and evaluating the assessment of learning outcomes at the course, program, degree, and institutional (general education) levels.
   b. Increase the use of technology throughout the college in support of teaching and learning and increase access to and dissemination of information among students and staff.
   c. Review Program Review data, and other applicable sources to identify and implement strategies to improve student success, including persistence and retention.