

Academic Affairs

AP 4105 DISTANCE AND CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION

References:

Education Code Sections 66700 and 70901 et seq.;
Title 5 Sections 55002.5, 55200 et seq. and 55260 et seq;
34 C.F.R. §602.17 (U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of
Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education
Act of 1965, as amended);
ACCJC Accreditation Standard 2

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

- secure credentialing/login and default password;
- proctored examination;
- new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs, or designee, in consultation with the Digital Learning Committee, shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy. No estimated additional student charges are associated with verification of student identity to each student at the time of registration.

Definitions:

Distance Education: Distance education means education that uses one or more of the modes 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.

Cerritos College offers distance education via five delivery modes:

- **Online:** All instruction and interaction are online with no mandatory synchronous nor in-person meetings.

- **Online with Required Activities:** All instruction and interaction will take place online except for either noted assessments and/or specified activities, which will be in-person or remote.
- **Online with Live Remote:** There are required scheduled remote meetings in real-time that are noted in the schedule of classes. All instruction and interaction are online.
- **Hybrid:** There is a combination of scheduled in-person or live remote meetings and online asynchronous teaching and learning with regular and substantive interaction in both modalities.
- **Hyflex:** Students will have the flexibility to participate in-person, remote, and/or online asynchronously.

Correspondence Education: Correspondence Education means education provided through one or more courses by a community college or district under which the college or district provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and student is limited due to separation, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced, although a regular cycle of assignment submissions and delivery of feedback should be established for facilitated learning. If a course is part correspondence and part residential training, it is considered a correspondence course. Correspondence education is not distance education.

Course Approval: The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in Administrative Procedure 4020 titled Instructional Programs and Curriculum. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

Curriculum Committee Certifications: When approving distance education courses, the Curriculum Committee will certify the following:

- **Course Quality Standards:** The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance and correspondence education courses as are applied to in-person classes.
- **Course Quality Determinations:** Determinations about the quality of the distance and correspondence education courses are made with the full involvement of the Instructional Dean, relevant department faculty, and the Curriculum Committee.
- **Regular Interaction Definition:** 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.

- **Substantive Interaction Definition:** 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 district's or program's accrediting agency.

Instructor Contact:

- **Distance Education:** Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education includes regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and students, as well as among students, as described in the course outline of record, 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.
- **Correspondence Education:** Each section of a course conducted through correspondence education will be established through a cycle of assignment submissions and comprehensive, responsive feedback, as determined by the Curriculum Committee. Instructors will be responsible for ensuring that each student will receive ongoing support toward making meaningful academic progress.

Students who participate in correspondence education will have access to student support services, including counseling, library searches, research assistance, and tutoring or other learning support through mail, e-mail, telephone, or in-person contact, as determined by the Curriculum Committee.

Course Outline of Record or Addendum to Course Outline: The course outline of record or an addendum to the official course outline of record for any new or existing course provided through distance or correspondence education must address the following:

- How course outcomes will be achieved in a distance or correspondence education mode;
- For distance education, how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirement of regular and substantive interaction;
- For correspondence education, how the portion of instruction delivered via the correspondence education documents facilitates learning progression through a cycle of assignment submissions and feedback; and

- The course design and all course materials must be accessible to every student, including students with disabilities. Faculty may request support by Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for students requiring accommodations.

Duration of Approval: All distance and correspondence education courses approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes to the course outline.

Faculty Selection and Workload: Instructors of course sections delivered through distance or correspondence education are individuals responsible for delivering course content who meet the qualifications for instruction established by the District's accrediting agency. Instructors will be selected using the District or college's same procedures for determining other instructional assignments.

Correspondence Education Students: A student is considered to be "enrolled in correspondence courses" if correspondence courses constitute 50 percent or more of the courses in which the student is enrolled during a financial aid award year.

In order for a correspondence education student to be considered a full-time student at the District, at least one-half of the student's coursework must be made up of non-correspondence coursework that meets one-half of the 12 semester hours per academic term.

- Support for Distance Learning Students
To ensure support for distance education students comparable to in-person students, services should be available in a distance education mode. Student Services include, but are not limited to, distance education readiness resources, counseling, library resources and library reference services, tutoring, fee payment, and the College's technical support systems.
- Deans/Area Managers may access a faculty member's Canvas course in the following situation:
 - Student complaint: A student files a complaint of instructional negligence or unresponsiveness that has continued for at least three business days (excluding holidays).
 - Faculty unresponsiveness: The faculty member does not respond to email or phone calls for at least three business days (excluding holidays).
 - Faculty request: The faculty member of record requests someone be added to their course.
- Access Procedures:
 - Notification: The Dean/Area Manager must send an email to the faculty member explaining the reason for accessing the Canvas course.
 - Limited Access: The Dean/Area Manager may only view areas of the Canvas course directly related to the complaint or reason for access.
 - Meeting (if applicable): If necessary, the Dean/Area Manager will schedule a meeting with the faculty member to discuss the findings and the complaint.

157 Distance education courses shall be accessed only via the College's Learning
158 Management System (LMS).

159 Faculty are required to give read-only access of their course materials, textbooks,
160 websites, and course packs to designated employees.

161 Office of Primary Responsibility: Vice President, Academic Affairs

Date Approved: August 20, 2007

Dates Revised: February 25, 2008; November 28, 2011; April 7, 2025

Date Reviewed: January 16, 2019