



## **Title 5, Section 55204**

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

- Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students, 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. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.
- Any portion of a course provided through distance education is conducted consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

## **Regular Effective Contact Guidelines**

Establishing and maintaining regular effective contact is not only a Title 5 requirement but also a practice that facilitates student-centered instruction and increases the achievement of student learning outcomes. All Distance Education instructors at El Camino College will implement regular effective contact using methods from each of the three categories below.

### **A. Faculty-Initiated Interactions**

- Begin class with instructor-guided introductions.
- Design daily or weekly assignments and projects that promote collaboration among students
- Pose questions in the discussion boards which encourage critical thinking skills and promote interaction among all course participants.
- Participate regularly in discussion activities with students and ensure that discussions remain on topic. (Providing students with an open-ended question forum, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor-initiated interaction.)
- Monitor activity meter to ensure that students participate fully.
- Create a specific forum for questions regarding course assignments.
- Ask students for feedback about the course on a regular basis and revise content as needed.
- Include means for varied types of interaction in the course design

### **B. Frequent & Timely Interactions**

- Establish guidelines for frequency of contact that are the same as in the face-to-face classroom; 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 distance education students
- Declare response time for student questions and assignment feedback (e.g. 24-48 hours)
- Maintain an active presence, particularly during the beginning weeks of a course
- Give frequent and substantive feedback throughout the course

### **C. Clear Expectations for Interactions**

- Specify course policy in the syllabus regarding frequency and timeliness of all contact initiated by the instructor
- Explain course policy regarding student-initiated contact (where to post questions, assignments, etc.) in the syllabus
- Clarify important dates, such as assignment and assessment deadlines, not only in the beginning but also throughout the course

## **Absences from Interactions**

- 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 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

## **Tools for Regular Effective Contact**

Interaction in the distance education classroom can be instructor-student, student-student, student-content and student-interface. Below are tools that may be used to implement regular effective contact.

- Course Announcements (e.g., videos, weekly summary, weekly review)
- Personalized Feedback
- Discussion Boards (e.g., question and answer forums, VoiceThread)
- Videoconferencing (e.g., Skype, CCC Confer)
- Collaborative Projects (e.g., group blogs, group discussions, wikis)
- Instructor-Created Modules
- Lectures (e.g., recorded, streaming, slides with audio narration)
- Podcasts
- Webinars
- Screencasts
- Virtual Office Hours
- Email
- Private Messaging
- Chat