

Guidelines for California Community Colleges in the Use of Telecommunications Systems in Instruction

The Academic Senate of California Community Colleges recommends that the following guidelines be adhered to in the governance, administration, and instruction of any course offerings in which the delivery of the instruction in the content of a community college course relies on a telecommunications system or systems for the majority of the instructional time allocated to such courses and to courses similar in content but different in the means of delivering the instruction:

General Requirements

1. Courses that rely on a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of instruction are governed by the legal structures that apply to courses taught in this mode and operate within the same organizational and academic structures that govern similar curriculum offerings.
2. Courses that rely on a telecommunication mode must be applicable to a campus-based degree or certificate program of instruction approved by the Coordinating Board for the institution.
3. The college requires its students to have a variety of educational experiences in order to qualify for transfer or for the associate degree and therefore 1 unit the number of units earned in courses taught primarily in a telecommunications mode that may be applied to the A.A. or A.S. degree requirements or to general education transfer requirements.
4. Each Institution offering or proposing to offer courses in a telecommunication mode shall stipulate the maximum proportion of the course requirements for each degree or certificate program that may be satisfied by telecourses, and provide a rationale for the proportion stipulated.
5. All courses which rely on a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of the instruction are clearly noted as such on students' transcripts.
6. Whenever the operation of telecommunication learning systems are centralized, such as regionally, district offices, district foundations, or one college within a multi-college district, programs, offerings, and courses should be subject to review and the case of course offerings approval, by an appropriate college committee, with a majority of faculty members approved by the Academic Senate.
7. Courses offered in a telecommunication mode must meet the quality standards maintained in on-campus resident credit instruction.

Course Review And Approval Procedures

1. A course chosen for delivery through a telecommunications mode will normally

be among the courses in the current course inventory that have been approved and taught by the Institution. A course which is to be taught initially as a telecourse will require additional justification for approval.

2. Courses utilizing a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of instruction are subject to the same approval process that governs curriculum development at a college or in a district with this process including faculty
3. For any course that relies on a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of the instruction in the course, faculty from the discipline area represented by the course
 - a. participate in the review of any materials that are not produced by that faculty and determine the need for local development of supplemental and enrichment materials and activities,
 - b. determine the minimum standards to be observed by the instructor(s) with regard to such matters as course requirements, course assignments, number/frequency of exams, instructor contact hours,
 - c. determine the equivalency of the course to existing course offerings,
 - d. determine the number of units of credit to grant for the course,
 - e. determine the place of the course in the college's curriculum.
4. A minimum number of instructor contact hours is established in such a way that this number plus the number of hours of telecommunications instruction at least equals the number of classroom contact hours required for a course offered in the traditional classroom mode.

Appointment And Evaluation of Faculty

1. Instructors assigned to courses taught in a telecommunications mode are selected by the regular procedures used to determine faculty assignment and are carefully selected from among the ranks of those with classroom experience in teaching comparable courses to assure that comparable academic rigor is maintained in courses taught in a telecommunications mode.
2. Instructors whose assignments include a course or courses which rely on a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of the instruction are provided with adequate advance time and with fair compensation to prepare for and train in the use of telecommunications materials.
3. Wherever courses offered in a telecommunications mode permit the enrollment of substantially greater numbers of students than would normally be taught in a similar class on campus, the instruction will be expected either to assign additional faculty in appropriate numbers or to adjust the faculty member's teaching load.
4. Procedures for evaluation of faculty responsible for telecourses must be equivalent to those used by the institution for the evaluation of faculty teaching on-campus resident credit courses.

Course Evaluation

1. Courses offered for credit in a telecommunications mode are regularly and systematically evaluated in ways similar to those employed when evaluating other courses offered for credit.

Student Performance

1. A student who wishes to enroll in a telecourse must satisfy the same requirements for admission to the institution, to the program of which the course is a part, and to the course itself, as would be expected of a student if he were enrolling in the same course taught in the traditional on-campus manner.
2. Each course offered in a telecommunications mode must include procedures for monitoring and assessing student performance. These procedures -- such as written exercises, papers, and examinations -- must be the same as or equivalent to those used in comparable on-campus resident credit courses. Standards for success or failure in telecourses must be as rigorous as those for on-campus resident credit courses.
3. Each course offered in a telecommunication mode must provide for timely feedback to students regarding their progress and performance, by methods equivalent to those used in on-campus resident credit courses.
4. Each course offered in a telecommunication mode must provide for live interaction between the student and the faculty member teaching the course. As a minimum, this interaction must include: 1) an orientation session or sessions at the beginning of the course; 2) periodic scheduled sessions between student and faculty member, either on an individual basis or in a group setting; and 3) provisions for unscheduled access by the student for advice or consultation with the faculty member, by telephone or other means.

Grading Practice

1. Grading practices for courses relying on a telecommunications system for instruction are comparable to those applied to students who complete similar courses with equal effort and achievement in courses taught in the traditional mode.
2. For all instructors assigned responsibility for courses that rely on a telecommunications system as the primary means of delivery of instruction, an established examination system ensures:
 - a. that an instructor determines student progress at significant points and with an established frequency or for a pre-determined minimum number of times,
 - b. that exams are given only in a supervised setting that assures the confidentiality of the exams and the integrity of the testing procedure,
 - c. that the procedures used guarantee the identity of the student taking the exam.

Student Services

1. A course outline, study guide, and statements of course objectives, policies, and requirements are distributed to all enrolled students and are available to all interested

persons.

2. Each student enrolled in a telecourse shall have access to all the academic support services which the institution provides for students enrolled in on-campus resident credit courses, such as academic advising, counseling, library and other learning resources, tutoring services, financial aid, etc. In addition, students enrolled in telecourses shall have access to campus events and other non-academic activities on the same terms as students enrolled in on-campus resident credit courses.