Guidance: Teaching for Fall 2020

The San Mateo County Community College District's goal is to provide intentional online course design and facilitation that is equivalent to face-to-face experience in quality, rigor, and engagement that support achievement of learning outcomes and student success. This guidance is developed to assist with the intentional online course design that may be necessary to assist faculty who had not originally prepared their course(s) for online, remote or a virtual modality.

In Spring 2020 all faculty members of SMCCCD were asked to provide emergency facilitation of remote instruction to complete their regularly scheduled face-to-face courses. However, the intent of this guidance is to help faculty revise their curriculum and pedagogy to fulfill SMCCCD's mission of student-centered and equitable instruction with awareness of contemporary best practices in distance education for the Fall 2020 semester.

Note: *This document is not meant to be comprehensive. It is meant to provide a level of guidance that can assist as a starting point for many who are relatively new to the online environment. Remember, it is fine to discuss the newness of this environment to both you, the instructor, and to your students. Students tend to respond well to the human condition and we are all going through this disruption together.*

Contents

Common Online Terms

Fully Online Course courses where the instructor and student are separated by distance for the entire course and can interact exclusively (100%) through the assistance of communication technology and the Canvas LMS. Instructors require *no mandatory on-campus meetings*.

A *Hybrid Distance Education Course* replaces some face-to-face class time with online instructional time. There should be an explicit connection between in-person instructional hours and online curriculum. **Pursuant to the county health orders, face-to-face instruction is limited only to instruction which cannot take place remotely.**

Asynchronous Learning refers to students' ability to access information, demonstrate what they've learned, and communicate with classmates and instructors on their own time. Students are not required to participate in course activities at the same time.

Synchronous Learning is a general term used to describe forms of education, instruction, and learning that occur at the same time, but not necessarily in the same place.
Regular and Effective Contact is defined as **contact between instructor and student, and among students in online classes**, that occurs regularly throughout the course. Regular and effective contact significantly increases student success and humanizes the online learning experience. For more information about regular and effective contact, please review [Title 5 Regulation Section 55204](#).

Preparation for Fully Online Course Delivery

Faculty who teach in the distance education modality will successfully complete courses in the following areas: online teaching pedagogy, technical training in the Canvas learning management system (LMS), and accessibility best practices.

1. Completion of the Quality Online Teaching and Learning (QOTL) 25-hour training or approved equivalent (e.g., @ONE, other documented training from other Districts) within the last three years. Completion of the QOTL training is compensated. If there are specific questions regarding compensation for training should start with their respective Dean of ASLT.
   a. The SMCCCD STOT training **does not** fulfill this expectation as the last training was offered in 2015.
   b. If Faculty in the SMCCCD were actively teaching online prior to the COVID-19 emergency, they are encouraged to engage in additional professional development opportunities, but are considered prepared for Summer.

2. Confirm a plan for asynchronous and/or synchronous online course delivery and communicate it as early as possible to students.

   a. Plans that **ARE okay**:
      i. An intentional combination of synchronous and asynchronous instructional strategies, including adaptations for students with difficulty accessing synchronous instruction.

   b. Plans that are **NOT okay:**
      i. [Correspondence education](#) i.e. mailing packets to students;
      ii. Solely relying on email interaction;
      iii. Using a platform other than Canvas as a primary point of access. (You can have other systems connected to your Canvas shell, but the Canvas shell for your course should be the initial point of access and you should maintain at least a minimal presence in Canvas.)

iv.　Holding required synchronous online class meetings during times other than scheduled course meetings. *It is recommended that synchronous online class meetings are scheduled for no longer than 90 minutes in duration.*

3.　Review the [Online Education Initiative Course Design Rubric](#).

4.　Submit your course for consultative peer review and approval.

5.　Familiarity with and knowledge of available [online student academic supports and Canvas help](#). Share resources with students in your Canvas course shell.

6.　Syllabus preparation and necessary elements to get your class started.

7.　Consult your local Curriculum Committee Chair regarding the process for adding a DE Addendum for your course to be finalized before December 20, 2020.

Faculty are encouraged to connect with their respective Distance Education Coordinator or ASLT Dean on your campus for more information.

Facilitation of Course Delivery Online

Faculty are responsible for the same course administrative functions as those teaching in a traditional classroom, including following the COR, choosing books and curriculum, verifying course rosters, adding students, and entering grades & timely student feedback. Faculty are responsible for creating and loading syllabi, assignments, exams/quizzes and populating the Canvas gradebook and calendars in their Canvas course shell(s).

Communication with Students

Faculty may want to consider early and frequent communication with students before the beginning of the fall semester. This provides clear expectations and an informed perspective on the nature of their fully online or hybrid course.

Early communication with students could include:
- A rough schedule of dates and times of any required synchronous meetings;
- Technology expectations for synchronous meetings, if any;
- Messaging registered students via WebSMART;
- Communication guidelines for hours when you will be answering emails in addition to your scheduled office hours;
- Sending the syllabus (or at least a partial syllabus) to inform students of overall course expectations;
- Personalized reminders on how to be successful in the class.

Note: You are not obligated to respond or communicate with students until the first day of class. However, in this environment, we know that students will do better if they receive material before their classes begin.

Regular and Effective Contact

Instructor-initiated regular effective contact requires early, continuing, and consistent communication from the instructor of record. When initiating weekly contact with students, instructors may use a variety of activities and multiple assessment measures to accommodate different learning styles. Interactions are demonstrable and documented within the Canvas LMS. The following dynamic synchronous or asynchronous interactions qualify as substantive:

- Pre-course contact with students (welcome message, letter, syllabus, Course expectations, etc.)
- Announcements
- Chat
- Discussion boards
- Emails (Canvas Inbox)
- Feedback that is personalized where appropriate on assessments (assignments, discussions, quizzes, rubrics, etc.)
- Virtual Office Hours (scheduled and synchronous)
- One-on-one meetings
- Question and Answer Discussion Boards
- Content review sessions
- Synchronous online meetings, i.e. Zoom
- Timely and responsive video check-ins (nudge videos, temperature checks)

Note: If you are not sure on how to achieve regular and effective contact in your course, contact your Instructional Technologist, Instructional Designer, or Faculty Lead for support.

Accessibility Considerations

To ensure equal opportunity for students, faculty are responsible for ensuring that their online course and materials meet accessibility requirements. The following are accessibility requirements in online course design:

- Provide closed captioning for videos
- Provide alt-tags for images
- Provide documents and handouts in multiple formats (pdf, word) with heading structure
- Include heading structure in Canvas pages (Heading 1, heading 2, etc.)
- Use descriptive links for website addresses and links
- Provide transcripts for all recorded lectures and videos
- Use true-bulleted lists (unordered or ordered)
- Use color sparingly with appropriate contrast

Reliable and consistent access to high-speed internet may not be an option for our students. Things like streaming video and live video conferencing and proctoring require immediate and stable internet connection. Requiring live video activities should not be a barrier for successful class participation. See Bandwidth Immediacy Matrix.

Note: For instructions on incorporating accessibility guidelines in Canvas, please visit the General Accessibility Design Guideline

Synchronous and Asynchronous Instruction Considerations

When thinking about whether to include Synchronous Instruction as part of your fall course, it is important to remember that students' situations will not have significantly changed from the Spring semester. Therefore, faculty are encouraged to take a student-centered, equity-minded perspective in their pedagogical considerations.

In most cases, it is recommended that courses that are lecture-based be conducted in an asynchronous format.

Benefits of Asynchronous Instruction from a student-ready perspective:

- Students who may be experiencing difficulty or trauma due to the ongoing pandemic can access curriculum at their own pace;
- Students have more time to reflect on what they learned;
- Shy students may feel more comfortable interacting with their professor or peers when they have time to compose thought-out emails rather than feeling pressured to speak up in a live conference;
- Providing videos and similar asynchronous materials allows all students to review and even help them with their time management with respect to their coursework.

Benefits of Synchronous Instruction from a student-ready perspective:

- Students can ask questions in real-time;
- Learning in real-time supports community building and shared knowledge acquisition;
- It can be an informal space—great for review and study sessions;
- Can provide optional/enriching experiences that support your curriculum.

Audio/video (Zoom) usage for synchronous class sessions:

Many of our students do not have access to reliable internet or technology (e.g. a computer, tablet, smartphone, etc.) nor a quiet space to work in, so please review the following recommendations:

- Instructors should be intentional and considerate in their planning for synchronous meetings/assessments and only require the synchronous coursework necessary to meet the course outline of record outcomes/accrediting standards.
- Instructors are welcomed to encourage students to participate through their microphone and/or camera; however, instructors are *strongly discouraged from requiring* students to use their cameras and/or microphone during a synchronous lesson.
- Instructors should consider the accessibility obstacles for synchronous lectures (e.g. captioning).
- Instructors who use participation in determining the final grade should recognize that students may not be able to fully participate in synchronous class sessions. Other asynchronous methods to assess student participation and engagement should be offered to provide ample opportunities to participate in the course (e.g. Canvas discussions).
- Zoom chat is recognized as a valid and reasonable measure of participation in the class session, especially when a user's internet connection or computer is not allowing use of the microphone.

Ultimately, just as we don't want to be penalized for being new to online teaching, we should not penalize students who are new to online learning and its technological requirements. A student's success in the course should not be dependent on the consistency of their internet or their ability to participate in synchronous class sessions.

Asynchronous Instructional Strategies

Asynchronous strategies enable communication and collaboration over a period of time through a 'different time-different place' mode. These modalities allow people to connect together at each person's own convenience and own schedule, and are useful for sustaining dialogue and collaboration over a period of time. In addition, asynchronous tools are helpful in capturing the history of the interactions of a group, allowing for collective knowledge to be more easily shared and distributed. Maintaining asynchronous activities requires consideration of executive function and time management skills of both students and faculty.

Strategy	Primary Uses	Drawbacks
Discussion boards	Dialogue that takes place over a period of time	Students may take longer to arrive at decisions or conclusions. Without pedagogical context, posts can result in students posting without engaging material. 'Just In Time' instructions should be included to mitigate confusion.
Web Publishing/Blogs	Sharing in-process ideas, comments and longer knowledge construction	Personal/professional space mixing can be problematic for privacy.
Email or Canvas Announcements	One-to-one or one-to-many communications	Students may not always receive all emails. Using Announcements and showing them at the top of the Canvas shell helps with this.
Recorded audio/video (e.g. lectures)	Communicating or teaching	These recordings are static and typically do not provide an option to answer questions or expand on ideas.
Narrated slideshows and Learning Objects	Communicating or teaching	These slideshows and objects are static and typically do not provide options to answer questions or expand on ideas.
Document libraries and web books	Managing resources	Version control can be an issue; not dynamic and runs the risk of losing student interest
Databases	Managing information and knowledge	Databases require clear definition and skillful administration; they are not recommended for novice users.
Surveys and polls	Capturing information and trends	Synthesis and use of information may not take place due to time constraints.
Shared Calendars	Coordinating activities	System compatibility
Web site links	Providing resources and references	If not regularly curated, 'broken' links will overwhelm sites

Synchronous Instructional Strategies

Synchronous strategies enable real-time communication and collaboration in a 'same time-different place' mode. However, this type of instruction, by definition, requires same-time participation by students and faculty. Coordinating synchronous sessions requires consideration of different time zones, conflicting schedules, familial commitments, as well as the cost of and access to high speed internet connection can create communication challenges.

Strategy	Primary Uses	Drawbacks
Live Audio or Video Conferencing	Live discussions and dialogue, oral presentations and sharing information	Students may not have reliable and consistent high-speed internet access. Quiet space in the home for participation in live sessions may not be available.
Chat and Messaging	Live information sharing of low-complexity issues, quick ad hoc communication. Provides additional channels of communication in synchronous meetings.	Works best in small groups or 1:1, privacy issues may arise when discussing grades. Many popular apps are not used by all students.
White boarding/ Mind mapping	Co-development of ideas in the moment	May require a form of conferencing, see conferencing drawbacks. Tools may have a steep learning curve for new users.
Collaboration and active learning apps - Ex: Google Docs/Slides, Pearson Live Response, etc.	Co-development of documents in the moment	Students may not have reliable and consistent high-speed internet access. May have a steep learning curve, may also require conferencing to be useful.

Additional Preparation for Hybrid Course Delivery

Hybrid course delivery including face-to-face instruction is only available for certain courses specified in advance by SMCCCD in coordination with San Mateo County Public Health Officer Orders. This section *only* applies specifically to those courses. If you are unsure if your course may be offered as a hybrid, consult with your Dean and/or campus Distance Education (DE) coordinator.

Courses taught in the hybrid format are still distance education courses. Therefore, recommendations for the online portion of the course still apply. See above sections items 1-6.

Any face-to-face portion of courses will have to follow State guidelines and [San Mateo County Health Officer Orders](). Additionally, students, faculty, and staff will have to comply with SMCCCD Health Screening, Social Distancing, Face Covering, and Sanitization protocols.

- Face-to-face instruction should be conducted only for learning experiences which can not be completed in an online modality. Only the ***minimum critical hours*** should be scheduled in-person.
- Language about rethinking the face-to-face elements to ensure what is done in-person is absolutely necessary for curriculum and SLOs.
- All planned face-to-face meetings should be scheduled in advance with meeting dates and times listed on the syllabus.
- Consider accommodations for students who are members of vulnerable populations (e.g., immunocompromised or live/care for someone who is immunocompromised, etc.) when

scheduling face-to-face instruction, i.e. one-on-one instruction for students, small groups, or alternative assignments that can be completed at home.

- ○ Consider reaching out to Distance Education Coordinators and/or Educational Access + Disability Resource Center staff members to help plan adaptations for your curriculum.

Virtual Student Services

Student Support Services are available to students even though campuses are closed. Students have access to tele-medicine, tele-counseling, tutoring, peer mentoring, and supplemental instruction. The Learning Center, and the Library will be offering virtual student services to help support our students and faculty during the Fall 2020 semester. Be sure to check with campus leadership to confirm plans on your campus and feel free to share this information with your students.

Take a look at the [Virtual Campus](#) website for students. If you find that information is missing, reach out to your campus leadership. Our goal is to make information as easily and readily available as possible. There are various links and more information about the following services on your campus:

- Academic Counseling, including programs such as EOPS/CARES, etc.
- The Learning Center
- Library
- Disabilities Resource Center/DSPS/Educational Access Center
- Wellness Center/Personal Counselling/Health and Wellness Services

Technology Resources

Please keep in mind that everyone--including students--are still experiencing technological issues, including availability of high-speed internet, working laptops, working webcams, etc. As such, the requirement of webcams for recording, dedicated private spaces, or other restrictions may not be possible for some students. **Finding the resources needed to comply with some requirements is an equity issue and should be given careful planning consideration.**

Technology hardware and software support will continue to be available at each campus. At the time of the writing of this document, plans are still being refined--keep watching your email for announcements. Additionally, there will be a link on the [Virtual Campus](#) for students to make technology requests. The Virtual Campus site also has links to SMCCCD ITS and Canvas Support for both faculty and students.

Resources

- **Regulation and Accreditation Considerations**
  - ○ [Clarification for Summer courses and requirements related to Title V and other standards (including accreditation)](#)

  - ○ [Definition of Distance Education from ACCJC.](#)

  - ○ [Policy on Distance Education from ACCJC.](#)

  - ○ [Title V Definition of Distance Education](#)

  - ○ [Title V Course Quality Standards](#)

  - ○ [Title V Definition of Regular and Effective Contact](#)

  - ○ [Section 508 of the COR DE Supplement](#)

- **Professional Development Resources**
  - [OEI Course Design Resources](#)
  - [Online Teaching Conference](#)
  - [CVC-OEI Faculty PD Resources](#)
  - [Skyline DE Handbook](#) (revision coming soon)
  - [CCC Accessibility Center](#)
  - [Universal Design for Learning (UDL)](#)
  - [Canada College DE](#) [Handbook Reference](#)
  - [Equity and Accessibility Considerations for Online Exams](#)