

CHAPTER 6: Educational Program
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 6.12.1 (AP 4105)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
San Mateo County Community College District

Subject: AP 6.12.1 Distance Education Revision

Date: 4/12

References: Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.; 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; 34 CFR Section 602.17; ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.6

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1. **Definition of Distance Education.** [34 CFR 600.2 “Distance education”, § 55200. Definition and Application]. In accordance with with federal and state regulations, distance education is defined as:

“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:

- a. The internet;
- b. One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
- c. Audio conference; or
- d. Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (a) through (c) of this definition.

The definition of “distance education” does not include correspondence courses.

2. **Separate Course Approval.** [§ 55206. Separate Course Approval] An addendum to the official course outline of record shall be made if any portion of the instruction of a new or existing course is provided through distance education. The addendum must be approved according to the District’s curriculum approval procedures as in

accordance with [Board Policy 6.13 Curriculum Development, Program Review, and Program Viability](#).

The addendum must address the following:

- a. How course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode;
 - b. How the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirement for regular and substantive interaction as defined in accordance with Title 5, § 55204. Instructor Contact.;
 - c. How the course design and all course materials must be accessible to every student, including students with disabilities, to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. “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.
3. The approval to offer a course via distance education shall continue to be in effect until changed or cancelled. If there are substantive changes to the course outline of record, the distance education approval shall be reviewed.
3. **Course Quality Standards** [§ 55202. Course Quality Standards]. When approving distance education courses, the Curriculum Committee will certify the following:
 - a. Course Quality Standards: The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.
 - b. Course Quality Determinations: Determinations and judgments about the quality of the distance education course were made with the full involvement of the Curriculum Committee’s approval procedures.
4. **Course Quality Standards** [§ 55202. Course Quality Standards]. Each section of a distance education course will include regular and substantive interaction established by an institution’s accrediting agency.

For purposes of this definition, an instructor is an individual responsible for delivering course content and who meets the qualifications for instruction established by an institution's accrediting agency.

For purposes of this definition, substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following—

- a. Providing direct instruction;
- b. Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
- c. Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
- d. Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
- e. Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.

An institution ensures regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency—

- a. 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
- b. 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.

5. Faculty Selection and Workload [§ 55208. Faculty Selection and Workload.]

Instructors of distance education shall be prepared to teach in a distance education delivery method consistent with the requirements of Title 5V, local district policies, and negotiated agreements. Instructors of distance education shall be prepared to teach in a distance education delivery method consistent with district policies and negotiated agreements.

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.

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).

6. **Student Verification Process.** Consistent with federal regulations and ACCJC policies pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must 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
7. **Student Authenticity and Verification.** The Vice President of Instruction shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:
 - a. secure credentialing/login and password
 - b. proctored examinations
 - c. new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification
8. **Student Privacy and Authentication.** The Colleges help protect students' privacy and authenticate students' identity by requiring secure login and password whenever a student registers for classes, reviews his/her enrollment information, or logs in to any other secure SMCCCD site. The District will not share any SMCCCD student login and password information with anyone, and students are advised not to share any SMCCCD login and password information. A statement to this effect is posted prominently for students each time they log in to WebSmart, the San Mateo Community College District's electronic registration system.