

**Allan Hancock Joint Community College District
Board Policy
Chapter 4 – Academic Affairs**

BP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Superintendent/President will ensure that procedures are in place to meet the accreditation requirements regarding Distance Education, as well as those of State and Federal statutes.

Legal References: Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.

**Adopted: 8/19/14
Reviewed: 6/14/22**

Allan Hancock Joint Community College District
Administrative Procedure
Chapter 4 – Academic Affairs

AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

Definitions

Distance education means education that uses technology 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 and is not self-paced. The definition of “distance education” does not include correspondence courses.¹

Instructor Contact

Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular and substantive interaction between the instructor(s) and students, (and among students where applicable), either synchronously or asynchronously.

“Substantive interaction”: means 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 institution’s or program’s accrediting agency.

¹ *Correspondence education means education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution 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, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. Correspondence education is not distance education.*

“Regular 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.

Student Authentication

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 courses 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, Academic Affairs shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student’s identity:

- Secure credentialing/login and password;
- Proctored examinations; or
- New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.

The Vice President, Academic Affairs shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges, if any, to each student at the time of registration.

Separate Course Approval

If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, an addendum to the official course outline of record shall add the following:

- How course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode.
- How the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirement for regular and substantive interaction between instructors and students (and among students where applicable).
- How the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The addendum shall be separately approved according to the district's adopted curriculum approval procedures.

The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.

The number of students assigned to any section of a course offered via distance education shall be consistent with that course's "course enrollment maximums" (CEMs) that are listed alongside its Course Outline of Record (COR). This number shall be the same for distance education and in-person classes that have no facilities limitations; and its determination shall be consistent with the process described in the mutually agreed document *Establishment and Modification of Course Enrollment Maximums*.

Duration of Approval

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

Ensuring Regular and Substantive Interaction

All distance education classes will shall adhere to the Academic Senate policy, Regular and Substantive Interaction and to the Title 5 definition of regular and substantive interaction described in this policy.

During the training required for all instructors teaching distance education courses (see "DE Instructor Qualification" below), DE faculty shall receive training on state and federal regulations regarding regular and substantive interaction in Distance Education courses, as well as on best practices to meet or exceed the requirements of such regulations.

Discipline faculty can also ensure regular and substantive contact in courses taught within their programs, by taking part on the Distance Education Course Peer Review Process approved by the Academic Senate.

DE Instructor Selection and Qualifications

As established in Title 5, "instructors of course sections delivered via distance education are individuals responsible for delivering course content that meets the qualifications for instruction established by the 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 addition, instructors of distance education courses shall be designated by the college as prepared to teach in a distance education delivery modality. That means that they are technically and pedagogically trained to meet or exceed the requirements for distance education established by the college, the accrediting agency and Title 5 regulations.

In order to ensure instructor readiness, all instructors teaching a distance education course for the first time shall complete the DE Technical and Pedagogical Readiness Training approved by the Academic Senate and established by the college. Such training is intended to ensure that all instructors who are new to teaching a distance education course:

- Have the skills necessary to deploy and manage in an effective way the technology necessary to meet the requirements of distance education courses.
- Are familiar with the federal, state, and local regulations that govern distance education.
- Have knowledge of course design and pedagogical best practices for distance education that meet or exceed the requirements of the accrediting agency, federal and state regulations, and the college's policies on distance education, including but not limited to regular and substantive interaction, student engagement, accessibility regulations, student authentication, etc.

As stated earlier under "Separate Course Approval," the number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance education shall be determined by and consistent with the mutually agreed document entitled *Establishment and Modification of Course Enrollment Maximums*.

Nothing in this section, or the entire document, shall supersede, impinge upon or detract from any negotiations or negotiated agreements between exclusive representatives and the district's governing board.

References: Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.; 34 Code of Federal Regulations §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 II.A.1

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