

Distance Education Handbook

Evergreen Valley College

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Distance Education Committee

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Modalities of Distance Education Courses

A course is considered to be a distance learning course if any percentage of it is delivered via a methodology where the student and the instructor are not present in the same physical location. EVC offers three types of distance learning courses: Online, and Hybrid (see definitions below).

Online courses - The entire course will be taught through distance learning, online using the Internet. Online courses may include video content (streaming video or cable broadcast). There will be **no** on-campus meetings.

Hybrid courses - This modality is some version of a course with a distance component and some required on-campus / face-to-face meeting(s). The on-campus portion is either regularly scheduled or irregularly scheduled face-to-face meetings as a class. A hybrid course with irregularly scheduled required on-campus meetings will include a specified number of formally scheduled meetings throughout the semester. This on-campus meeting schedule must be noted in the instructor's syllabus. A hybrid course with regularly scheduled on-campus component includes formally scheduled weekly meetings throughout the semester. The on-campus meetings must be indicated in the schedule of classes.

Web-Enhanced Course – These are NOT DL courses. These courses are taught on campus and uses Web sites to enhance various class activities. The Web site includes information, learning, or collaboration features; students access the course site before or after class to further learn what is taught and discussed in class.

Orientation

A common rationale for requiring students to attend on-campus meetings is course orientation. Note that, students often require reviews and refreshers of orientation content in order to fully internalize the information in them. Thus, an online version of the orientation can not only provide this review opportunity, but replace the need for the face-to-face orientation meeting altogether. Virtual orientations can include audio/video material (e.g. instructor's presentation or screen captures, etc.). Most DE faculty utilizes the service of CCCConfer, or ConferNow, free web-conferencing services provided to the California Community College Systems.

Proctored Exam

Another common rationale for requiring students to attend on-campus meetings are exams so that the integrity of tests can be guaranteed along with the authenticity of the student. However, such exams, typically used in on-campus courses, may not be appropriate for the online modality.

Evergreen Valley College Proctored Exam Policy:

1. Online courses must have at least one proctored exam

2. The exam proctored must have a substantial weight (30% or more)

Curriculum Committee DL Course Approval Process

Title 5 requires that all distance learning courses be separately reviewed and approved by local curriculum committees. The purpose of this review is to verify that such courses are comparable in terms of rigor, scope, and conduct to equivalent on-campus classes. The Distance Learning Addendum is a component that exists in CurricUNET. Instructors would need to request their deans to inform the Curriculum Specialist to provide them access to the Online Supplement in CurricUNET in order to propose online or hybrid courses. Once in the CurricUNET system this will follow the standard ACCC procedure and timeline for instructors to teach the course in online or hybrid mode.

***Note:** Similar to regular courses, the DE online/hybrid addendum need to be revised every five years.*

Distance Learning courses are required to be equivalent and comparable to their on-campus version in all but the delivery modality. Distance education instruction is viewed as an alternative instructional methodology only. Therefore, the existing course outline's expectations and parameters establish the requirements of the course quality for this proposal. Separate approval is required for each type of a Distance Learning course (online or hybrid).

Acting on the recommendations of the Distance Education Committee on distance learning courses, the Curriculum Committee approved the information requirements set forth in the Distance Learning Addendum form, which is part of the course documentation materials reviewed by the ACCC. It is the intent of this documentation to clearly identify how the distance class is comparable to on-campus classes.

Title 5 requires that *all* types of distance learning courses be separately reviewed and approved. This includes both new courses and courses already offered in the traditional mode. In August 1999, the Chancellor's Office began requiring that the curriculum for each DL course and its associated materials and resources be reviewed and revised, as necessary, when the course undergoes curriculum review pursuant to title 5, sections 55002 and 55206, every six years as part of the accreditation process.

Characteristics of Distance Learning Courses at EVC

The course *must* adhere to the approved course outline in terms of depth and breadth of content and student learning outcomes. Methodologies, assignments, interaction and evaluation methods should be comparable to the equivalent on-campus class.

The ACCC has determined that methods of evaluation used should ensure the same level of integrity, security and scrutiny associated with equivalent on-campus classes. Depending on the assessment method designed for each course, this may require that testing be done in a proctored environment or on-campus, rather than online.

Since any change in the load value of a course from that stated on the approved course outline is subject to collective bargaining, all distance learning class maximums must be the same as those for the equivalent on-campus classes, except if otherwise specified in the contract.

On-campus meetings are generally not required for online courses but are required for hybrid courses at formally scheduled times as listed in the Schedule of Classes. An on campus orientation meeting for online courses are optional, but orientation is mandatory. Typically, the DL students have a challenging schedule or other issues that prevent them from attending an on-campus orientation. If an on-campus orientation is not conducted, online orientation may be offered or orientation document needs to be emailed to all registered students prior to the beginning of the course. Following are suggested examples for items to be included in an orientation meeting and / or syllabus:

1. Course access information (User name and password)
2. E-mail
3. Hardware and software requirements
4. How to prepare for the online course
 - Electronic resources available at EVC
 - Helpdesk support
 - Content support

Proctoring Center

On-campus or proctored testing situations may be required depending on the evaluation methodologies comparable to on-campus classes. The EVC Proctoring Center (LE-204) provides a secure location for test administration for Distance Education courses at the request of the EVC instructors. They may proctor their exams in LE-204 or contact the Academic Skills and Tutoring Instructor to book a slot during the listed hours for their online classes. All online students are required to take proctored exam(s) to establish the integrity of the courses and the authenticity of the students. If students cannot attend the proctored exam(s) on campus, it is the student's responsibility to find a suitable proctor and make arrangements with the proctor and the instructor of the course. There is an Online Proctored Exam Request Form that must be received one week prior to the exam test date.

Distance Learning Faculty Requirements

Faculty teaching Distance Education (online/hybrid) courses must have taken a fully online 3.0 unit course as a student on online teaching and learning, and completed a 10 hour training developing their course(s) using the Course Management System. EVC offers training in developing and conducting a DL course through the Technology Resource Center (TRC) in LE-227 in the library building. The step-by-step instructions for Canvas training tutorials can be downloaded from the following self-paced course **Develop Online Courses with Canvas:**

Web link: <https://sjeccd.instructure.com/login/canvas>

Please contact the Instructional Technology Faculty and DE Coordinator, Nasreen Rahim, to add you in the self-paced course if you are not included in the course.

Teaching a DL course requires both pedagogical and technical knowledge; faculty are likely to be frustrated with their DL course experience if they do not have this knowledge prior to teaching at a distance. TRC offers a variety of workshops for faculty who are new to DL. This is run by the Instructional Technology Faculty who offers training on regular basis. The Instructional Technologist at EVC ensures that all instructors assigned to teach a course in any Distance Learning type have completed the a series of training (ten hours total) offered at the TRC or attended an equivalently qualified Distance Learning instructor training program offered by @ONE, to meet the required skills necessary to instruct such courses efficiently and effectively. As cohort of the Online Education Initiatives (OEI) since January 2016, EVC has begun the process to integrate the [Course Design Rubric for the Online Education Initiative](#). The aim of the Distance Education program is to train faculty how to not just build courses in Canvas, but how to build quality courses following the rubric standards.

Instructor - Student Contact in Distance Learning Courses

DL courses require frequent communication with students. Research shows that instructor's contact is the most important factor contributing to DL student success. Title 5 requires that instructor-student contact should be both "effective and regular" (section 55204.) Instructors and departments proposing the course should implement this regulation in a manner that is equivalent to the on-campus course. The subcommittee will make its determination using the "comparability" standard - is the amount and nature of the contact comparable to that associated with the on-campus class? Any portion of a course that is taught at a distance must include regular and effective instructor-student communication, as specified below. A hybrid course would demand a regular communication not only during the on-campus portion of the course, but also in each distance portion of the course. The established meeting time for a hybrid course will be formally scheduled in the Schedule of Classes.

Instructors are expected to communicate with their students through (1) individual email and (2) on the discussion forums in response to students' posts on specific pre-designed topics, and (3) via general announcements to all the students.

1. E-Mail

- Prior to the beginning of the course - Instructors are expected to send a "welcome" email to all registered students. An orientation file needs to be attached to the email providing the students access information, as well as information regarding the course.

- **During the first two weeks of the course** - instructors are expected to initiate contact with all students who did not contact them at least once a week, to verify that they were able to access and navigate the course properly, and to remind the students of their expected activities for that week, as well as the to offer assistance with the required assignment(s) and discussion(s).

- **During the rest of the course** - instructors are expected to respond to individual email message within 24 hours. Individual reminders of class assignments and required activities are best if both are sent individually and announced on the course Announcement page. This form of individual attention has been proven to have a direct effect on students' attitudes and consequently in their success.

2. Discussion Forums

Instructors are expected to read all of their students' posts in each module and to mark them as part of the grade as determined in each course. While instructors do not have to respond to each student post, they are required to monitor that students stay on the discussion topic designed for the class, and that they respond to other students' posts in addition to responding to the instructor's topic. Students appreciate when instructors comment on their post as it helps them clarify content and / or validate their comprehension and analysis of the material they are learning.

3. Announcements

Announcements on the course Announcement page are used to address all students at once, for general information such as additions made to learning modules, test date reminders, etc. An e-mail distribution list can be used for the same purpose, but should not replace the Announcement page, since some students may access the course without reading their email first.

Distance Learning Course Reports

Distance Learning courses require the same reports as on-campus courses (such as first census or grade sheets)

To ensure that students attend class and access the material designed for the class, instructors are expected to **include at least one content-specific assignment due before first census date** (first census date is the Monday nearest one fifth of the course). If a student does not hand in the assignment (or enter a content-related post to the discussion forum) by first census date, s/he should be considered a No Show and dropped from the course. While initial contact for class management purposes and posting of a student bio indicate the student had some involvement in the course, these parameters are not content-specific and thus are insufficient to determine first census attendance in the class.

Accessibility to Students with Disabilities

Both State and Federal law require community colleges to operate all programs and activities in a manner, which is accessible to students with disabilities. Accordingly, as

the system develops its capacity for creation of technology-based instructional resources and the delivery of distance learning, it must proceed with the needs of all students in mind, including the needs of students with disabilities. Under the CCC DE Access Guidelines, Chapter 6, Standards and Criteria for Courses, Section 55200 ("Definition and Application"), CA Code 11135, and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended in 1998, the Access Board has established standards for electronic and information technology. The regulations require that electronic and information technologies developed, procured, maintained or used are accessible to students with disabilities. The college, through the ITDC, provides the necessary training and resources for faculty to ensure accessibility in Web-mediated courses,

Resources for Distance Learning Instructors and Students

- Instructor: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-4131>
- Student: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-4121>
- ITSS Helpdesk:
 - e-mail: - helpdesk@sjeccd.edu
 - Phone – (408) 274-7900 x6411
- General Distance Learning Program information : (408) 274-7900 X6426
- Helpdesk for Technical support
 - Phone (for registered Distance Learning students only): (408)270-6411
 - e-mail - helpdesk@sjeccd.edu
- Online Library – <http://www.evc.edu/library>
- Tutoring Center: <http://www.evc.edu/current-students/tutoring-center>
- Online bookstore- <http://www.bkstr.com/evcstore/home/en>
- Online Financial Aid –
<http://www.evc.edu/current-students/enrollment-services/financial-aid-and-scholarships>

Resource Links

- Detailed link for Distance Education Program:
<http://www.evc.edu/academics/academic-affairs/distance-education>
- Detailed Information Link for Technology Resource Center (TRC):
<http://www.evc.edu/academics/divisions-departments/technology-resource-center>
 - List of Online and Hybrid Courses: <http://www.evc.edu/current-students/schedule-of-classes/spring-distance-ed-courses>