Contra Costa College

# Distance Education Faculty Handbook



Distance Education Committee approval: May 15, 2020
Academic Senate Council approval: May 18, 2020

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# What is Distance Education (DE)?

Distance education, or DE for short, "means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by time and/or distance and interact through the assistance of technology... In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794d)" ([Title 5, section 55200](#)).

DE courses are primarily categorized as follows:

- **Fully Online (FO) (also known as "100% online")** – "Instruction involving regular and effective online interaction that takes place synchronously or asynchronously and is supported by online materials and activities delivered through the college's learning management system, and through the use of other required materials. All approved instructional contact hours are delivered through these online interactions. Fully online classes do not require in-person assessments or activities. If synchronous online activities are required, the schedule of classes indicates dates and times" (DEETAC DE Guidelines 14).

- **Partially Online (PO) (also known as "hybrid")** – "Instruction involving regular and effective online interaction for any portion of the approved contact hours that takes place synchronously or asynchronously and is supported by materials and activities delivered in person and online through the college's learning management system, and through the use of other required materials. Any portion of a class that is delivered online must follow a separate approval process. The approved online portion must meet the regular and effective contact regulation. The schedule of classes indicates dates, times and locations of the required in-person components" (DEETAC DE Guidelines 14).

# Preparing for Online Teaching

Before teaching a distance education course in the Contra Costa Community College District (4CD) - whether fully or partially online - you are required to successfully complete a professional development program in online pedagogy and technology approved by the Districtwide Distance Education Council (DDEC). For more information about this requirement, please refer to Article 27 of the new Contra Costa Community College District/United Faculty 2019-2020, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 [Collective](#)

Bargaining Agreement. If you have completed comparable training outside of the district, you can submit this training for review via this form: Submission for Comparable Training for Online Teaching at CCCCD.

## *4CD Online Teaching Institute Courses*

To help you complete the required training for online teaching, the 4CD Online Teaching Institute now offers one course on online technology (*Canvas for Beginners*) and two courses on online pedagogy: *Becoming an Effective Hybrid Instructor* and *Becoming an Effective Online Instructor*. These courses are offered on a rotating basis throughout the calendar year, including fall, winter, spring, and summer. All courses are free of charge for part- and full-time faculty in the district. According to article 27.2.3 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, "Faculty who are scheduled to teach online in spring or fall of 2020 and who have taught online in the 2018-19 or 2019-20 academic years but who have not completed DDEC-approved training are eligible to be compensated for up to 10 hours at their "other academic rate" for participating in DDEC-approved training."

Courses Offered by 4CD Online Teaching Institute:
- ***Canvas for Beginners***: a self-paced course on how to use Canvas for face-to-face, partially online, and fully online courses
- ***Becoming an Effective Hybrid Instructor***: a 4-week hybrid course on how to design and teach partially online courses
- ***Becoming an Effective Online Instructor***: a 4-week online course on how to design and teach fully online courses

To see the current schedule of 4CD courses, go to the CCCCD Professional Development Calendar and select "District Office."

## *CVC/@ONE Courses*

For faculty seeking professional development training in distance education through the state, the California Virtual Campus (CVC)/Online Network of Educators (@ONE) offers a number of both facilitated and self-paced online courses for new and experienced online faculty. Topics range from introductions to Canvas and online teaching, to courses on equity and culturally responsive teaching, to humanizing online teaching and learning, to creating accessible online content. @ONE courses are offered throughout the calendar year, low-cost, and in some cases, free of charge. To view their course offerings, visit cvc.edu.

### Online Teaching and Design Certificates

While district faculty are not currently required to do so, if you wish to pursue a certificate in online teaching, there are several programs in California to choose from:

- [CVC/ONE's Certificate in Online Teaching & Design](#)
- [Cal State East Bay's Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning](#)

*For questions about preparing for online teaching, contact CCC's DE Coordinator.*

### Quality Course Design

Completing the required training in online pedagogy and technology will go a long way towards helping you design a new online course. To ensure that your course is of the highest quality - effective, equitable, and accessible - it is highly recommended that you develop it according to the [CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric](#), created by the California Virtual College-Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI) and endorsed by CCC's Academic Senate Committee. Since this rubric is currently lacking a section on equitable online teaching, you are also encouraged to use the [Online Equity Rubric](#) created by the Peralta Community College District.

# Effective and Compliant Online Teaching

Once you have completed the required training in online pedagogy and technology, and designed a high quality online course, you should be ready to start teaching online. Teaching or "delivering" an online course requires complying with the federal and state regulations below regarding unit of credit, regular and effective contact, accessible online content, and publisher content.

### Unit of Credit

As stated in the Contra Costa College catalog, "Units of credit are established based on the minimum amount of time students will need to achieve the intended learning outcomes as described by Title 5, section 55002.5. In general, for a full-term lecture course students spend on average three hours each week in class and six hours of study time out of class, totaling a minimum of 9 hours each week to earn three-units of credit…

Online classes require more hours of independent work in lieu of face-to-face meetings, therefore students should expect to spend more time than the minimum stated above."

## *Regular and Effective Contact Policy*

According to California state law (Title 5), "Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students, and among students, either synchronously or asynchronously, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq." ([Title 5, section 55204](#)).

Regular and effective contact between instructor and student and among students increases student success in online learning[1].

1. **Instructor-initiated contact** is a key feature of distance education courses, and it is what makes them different from other types of courses, such as correspondence courses.
2. **Student-to-student interaction** is another key feature of distance education courses, and it is what makes them different from other types of courses, such as self-paced courses.

These forms of contact are also required by federal regulatory requirements, state education codes, and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), and are recommended by the Statewide Academic Senate for Community Colleges[2]. Regular and effective contact is a California Title V (section 55204) educational requirement that requires instructors to incorporate instructor-initiated, regular, and effective contact into online and hybrid course design and delivery. This means that it is the responsibility of the instructor to initiate contact with students by, for example, making announcements, facilitating discussions, reaching out when they are inactive or miss assignments, and monitoring their overall progress. It is also the responsibility of the instructor to design and encourage opportunities for students to interact with other students in the course, for example via discussion boards, group

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[1] Baker, Credence. "[The impact of instructor immediacy and presence for online student affective learning, cognition, and motivation](#)." *Journal of Educators Online* 7.1 (2010): n1.
[2] See [Federal Regulatory Requirements](#); See [Title V State Code of Regulations](#); See [ACCJC Policy on Distance Ed](#); See ASCCC "[Ensuring an Effective Online Program](#)"

collaboration, peer review, and other student-to-student interactive activities. See the checklist and example communication plan on pages 12-17 for further information.

## 1. Instructor-Initiated Contact

Instructor-initiated, or faculty-to-student, contact, includes establishing contact prior to, and at the beginning of, the course, as well as maintaining contact throughout the duration of the course.

*Establishing Contact*

Faculty are responsible for doing the following to establish pre-course contact with students and guide them when the course begins:

- Send a welcome email 1 week prior to the course start date to help establish contact between instructor and student and guide the students to start the course. Make sure to archive your welcome letter in your orientation module and/or announcements for late add students.
- Include a plan or policy for regular and effective contact (ex: Communication Plan) in your syllabus and orientation module.
- Send an announcement on the first day of class to remind students that the course has started and what to do first.
- List your contact information in multiple places (ex: homepage, syllabus, communication plan, orientation module, etc.) with your response times (ex: 24-48 hours).
- If possible, provide a captioned video to welcome students (recommended).

*Maintaining Contact*

To maintain instructor-initiated, or faculty-to-student, contact, throughout the course, faculty are responsible for doing the following:

- Send out 1-3 weekly announcements that are archived in Canvas.
- Respond to students who ask questions in the questions forum within your stated response times.
- Communicate with individual students (ex: through Canvas Inbox, Canvas Chat) within your stated response times).
- Hold weekly online office hours (ex: ConferZoom video conferencing, Canvas Chat, Canvas Inbox).
- Participate in required discussions or other student-to-student interaction

activities.
- Provide timely and frequent, meaningful and individualized, qualitative and quantitative feedback on student work within your stated response times.
- Contact students who need help, are falling behind, etc.
- Inform students and your manager when you cannot have regular effective contact for any reason, and inform them again when it does resume.

### *Note to Faculty Who Use Publisher Content*

- Instructors who use third-party tools, such as publisher packs or other digital apps, must authenticate students through the college's learning management system (LMS).
- Even when third-party tools are used, instructors must use the LMS to facilitate interaction according to the requirements above, and to document the types of instructor-to-student contact that take place via the third-party system.

## 2. Student-to-Student Interaction

Student-to-student interaction includes opportunities for both students to initiate contact with other students and to have consistent, meaningful interaction with their peers throughout the course. Faculty are responsible for designing, facilitating, and encouraging such opportunities as the following:

### *Required facilitated student-to-student interactions:*

- icebreaker or introduction activity in week 1
- ongoing question forums with student replies
- informal student-to-student interaction (ex: cyber cafe/student lounge/water cooler)
- allow comments on announcements

### *Plus at least 2 of the following facilitated student-to-student interactive activities throughout the duration of the course:*

- whole class discussions with required student-to-student interaction
- group discussions with required student-to-student interaction
- group assignments with required student-to-student interaction
- group presentations
- group projects

- peer reviews
- activities with required student-to-student interaction (ex: Padlet, Flipgrid, etc.)
- collaborative annotation assignments with required student-to-student interaction
- student video assignments with required student-to-student interaction
- ConferZoom for synchronous activities with required student-to-student interaction

*Note to Faculty Who Use Publisher Content*

- Instructors who use third-party tools, such as publisher packs or other digital apps, must authenticate students through the college's learning management system (LMS).
- Even when third-party tools are used for student-to-student contact, instructors must use the LMS to facilitate interaction according to the requirements above, and to document the types of contact that take place via the third-party system.

## *Universal Design & Accessibility*

Conform to the principles of Universal Design in Education (UDE) as defined by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University as "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design." Promoting the values of diversity and inclusion, UDE recognizes the full spectrum of user abilities and thus benefits all members of the college community.

Courses created in accordance with Universal Design principles will:
- provide an uncluttered interface with consistent layout and navigation.
- avoid moving or flashing images and self-starting video or audio.
- prove useful to people with diverse abilities.
- accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- communicate necessary information to the user regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that all public institutions' electronic and information technology be accessible to persons with disabilities. At CCC, this means that all courses - whether face-to-face, partially online (hybrid), or fully online - must have accessible online content. See [the CCC DE webpage](#) for accessibility resources. Accessible online content includes the following:

- Any images will have alternative text or alternative descriptions to provide access for students with visual impairments.
- Instructional videos will have accurate closed captioning.
- Audio recordings will include transcripts.
- Pages will use levelled headings (such as Header 2 for section headings) accessible to a screen reader.
- Hyperlinks will be presented using meaningful link text rather than URLs.
- Content will provide adequate color contrast (such as black on white background), font size (such as 12-14), and font style (such as Arial or Tahoma) to ensure readability.
- Any files (ex: PDF, Word, PowerPoint) should be accessible.

### *Publisher Content*

According to Title 5 regulations, all distance education courses at CCC must be delivered through the college-adopted LMS (Canvas). If your course requires students to engage with a publisher application within Canvas or a publisher website outside of Canvas, it should be accessible, require student authentication, and protect student privacy.

In addition, if students are required to purchase publisher content for your course, the materials must comply with the following regulations:
- "Students cannot be required to pay for access to electronic materials "designed primarily for administrative purposes, class management, course management or supervision" ([Title 5, section 59400(b)](#)).
- "Where instructional materials are available to a student temporarily through a license or access fee, the student shall be provided options at the time of purchase to maintain full access to the instructional materials for varying periods of time ranging from the length of the class up to at least two years. The terms of the license or access fee shall be provided to the student in a clear and understandable manner prior to purchase" ([Title 5, section 59400(c)](#)).

*For questions and concerns about regular and effective contact, accessible online content, and publisher content, contact the DE Coordinator.*

# DE Course Approval

Title 5 also requires an "addendum" (to the course outline of record) to be completed and approved before any new or existing course can be taught partially or fully online

([Title 5, section 55206](#)). At CCC, this means completing the DE Addendum or Addendum for DE in Emergency Situations, and having it approved by the DE Coordinator as well as the Curriculum & Instruction Committee (CIC).

*Contact the DE Coordinator for the DE Addendum or Addendum for DE in Emergency Situations.*

# Local Peer Online Course Review (POCR) Program

Because CCC is a member of the CVC-OEI consortium, your online course(s) can receive a Quality Reviewed "badge" for alignment with the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric. To achieve this, you are encouraged to participate in CCC's local Peer Online Course Review (POCR) program, in which a trained faculty mentor will help you align your course to each section of the rubric.

*For support designing and/or aligning your online course(s) to the CVC-OEI rubric, contact the DE Coordinator.*

# DE Evaluations

For information related to evaluations of online and hybrid courses, see the Evaluations section of the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).

# Resources and Support for Online Teaching

See [the CCC DE webpage](#) for the latest resources for online and hybrid teaching and learning. Canvas support is available 24/7 for CCC faculty at 1-833-221-7461.

### CCC Distance Education Team

The DE team at CCC is dedicated to meeting your distance education needs and helping you best serve your students. See [the CCC DE webpage](#) for the CCC DE Team's contact information.

# ✅ Checklist for Regular and Effective Contact

Created by: Maritez Apigo, CCC Instructional Designer & English Professor
Her Regular and Effective Contact Workshops "Goody Bag" website is at: tiny.cc/cccrec

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# ~ Faculty-to-Student Contact ~

## Establishing Contact

- ☐ Email a welcome letter 1 week prior to the course start date to guide students how to begin the course successfully. Make sure to archive your welcome email in your orientation module and/or announcements for late add students.
- ☐ Include a plan or policy for regular and effective contact (ex: Communication Plan) in your syllabus and orientation module. (See the CVC-OEI Example Communication Plan at the end of this document.)
- ☐ Send an announcement on the first day to remind students that the course has started and what to do first.
- ☐ List all contact information methods in multiple places (homepage, syllabus, communication plan, orientation module, etc.) along with your response times (24-48 hours).
- ☐ If possible, provide a captioned video to welcome students (recommended).

## Maintaining Contact

- ☐ Send out 1-3 weekly announcements.
- ☐ Respond to students who ask questions in the questions forum  within your stated response times.
- ☐ Communicate with individual students (ex: email, Canvas inbox, Canvas Chat) within your stated response times
- ☐ Hold online office hours during your stated times (ex: Video conference using Zoom, Canvas Chat)
- ☐ Instructor participation in required discussions or other student-to-student interaction activities
- ☐ Provide timely and frequent, meaningful and individualized, qualitative and quantitative feedback on student work within your stated response times
- ☐ Contact students who need help, are falling behind, etc.

□ Inform students and your manager when you cannot have regular effective contact for any reason, and inform them again when it does resume.

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# ~ Student-to-Student Interaction ~

## *All of these small-scale interactions:*

□ icebreaker or introduction activity in week 1
□ ongoing questions forum with student replies
□ cyber cafe/student lounge/water cooler/study groups activity
□ allow comments on announcements

## *Plus at least 2 of the following for larger-scale interactions and deeper learning:*

□ weekly discussions with required student-to-student interaction
□ group discussions with required student-to-student interaction
□ group assignments with required student-to-student interaction
□ group presentations
□ group projects
□ peer reviews
□ activities with required student-to-student interaction (Padlet, Flipgrid, etc.)
□ collaborative annotation assignments with required student-to-student interaction
□ student video assignments with required student-to-student interaction
□ Zoom for synchronous student-to-student interaction activities

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# ~ CVC-OEI Example Communication Plan ~

*There are a number of ways to stay in communication with students. An important part of this is to make sure you've let them know how and when they can expect to hear from you.*

*This is just an example of a "communication plan." Feel free to customize to suit your individual course. For example, short (under 3 minutes) weekly video check-ins are a great idea but if you won't be using those, remove that section. Add this plan to your*

*syllabus and orientation module. The HTML code is provided below for your orientation module in Canvas.*

*The red ALL CAP text describes where to put a suggested link. Delete the red text from your course page before publishing.*

*You'll need to download these two images into your course (or find your own):*

[group connecting via different methods.jpeg](#)

[inbox icon.png](#)

NOTE: *Many instructors might be using this page as a model. You may want to edit the two introductory paragraphs so they're more in your own words just so your students don't come across the exact same text in multiple courses. ;-)*

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[Page Title, something like: *How Will We Be Connecting?* OR *Our Communication Plan*]



I value an interactive and personal learning environment and I intend to harness the technological tools available to us to communicate with you in a variety of ways.

I want to make sure you know that you're not alone in the course. I care about you, I care about the challenges you face, and I care about supporting your learning. Here are some of the ways I'll connect with you throughout the semester:

# "Introduction" Discussion

Think of this discussion [LINK TO YOUR INTRO DISCUSSION] as our first class period. It's the first time that we'll virtually *meet* and start getting to know each other as unique and multifaceted individuals. [If this is a required activity, let them know.]

# Module Discussions

I monitor these discussions daily and will chime in with opinions and clarifications as it seems appropriate. The Student Q&A forum is where I encourage you to post general questions about the class - and feel free to answer someone's question when you can!

# Weekly Video-Check In

Every week, I'll record a brand new video for you where I briefly preview that week's module.  I might also share a story, recommend an app, give props to a class member, or mention something about [YOUR COURSE TOPIC] I saw in the news.

# Gradebook Feedback

Not only will you find your grades and rubric scores in our gradebook [LINK TO GRADEBOOK], I also use the comments feature to ask questions and spark further conversations about your ideas and contributions. I do my best to grade assignments and offer feedback within 5-7 days.

- How do I view grades and instructor comments?
- How do I view annotation feedback in an assignment?

# Announcements

When I come across information I think will be valuable for you, I'll post it as an announcement. [LINK TO ANNOUNCEMENTS] Some of these posts relate to [YOUR COURSE TOPIC] specifically, but some will feature useful resources that will help you as a student or as a human being.  If we need to make any changes to our semester schedule, I'll also post these in the announcements area.

# Weekly Office Hours

I set aside **XX** hours each week to be available to you if you need me. Check out this semester's syllabus [LINK TO SYLLABUS] for specific days and times. [You could also put the info right here so they don't have to click anywhere else. If you'll be using Zoom or some other video conferencing software for office hours, let them know.]

# Canvas Mail



If I need to get a hold of you this semester, I'll contact you through Canvas mail.  You can access this feature by clicking "Inbox"  in the left-hand global navigation bar.

I respond to email within **XX** hours, Monday through Friday. I reserve the right to wait until Monday to reply to messages sent over the weekend. ;-) Please include the course name and section number in the Subject Line (e.g., ENG 101, Sec. 1129).

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# ~ CVC-OEI Example Communication Plan

&lt;div class="image-and-hover" style="padding: 0 15px; float: left;"&gt;&lt;img src="/courses/837/files/80070/download?wrap=1" alt="group connecting via different methods" width="264" height="176" data-api-endpoint="https://ccconlineed.instructure.com/api/v1/courses/837/files/80070" data-api-returntype="File" /&gt;&lt;/div&gt;

&lt;p&gt;I value an interactive and personal learning environment and I intend to harness the technological tools available to us to communicate with you in a variety of ways.&lt;/p&gt;

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&lt;h2&gt;"Introduction" Discussion&lt;/h2&gt;

&lt;p&gt;Think of this discussion&lt;span style="color: #ff0000;"&gt;[LINK TO YOUR INTRO DISCUSSION]&lt;/span&gt; as our first class period. It's the first time that we'll virtually *meet* and start getting to know each other as unique and multifaceted individuals. &lt;span style="color: #ff0000;"&gt;[If this is a required activity, let them know.]&lt;/span&gt;&lt;/p&gt;

&lt;h2&gt;Module Discussions&lt;/h2&gt;

&lt;p&gt;I monitor these discussions daily and will chime in with opinions and clarifications as it seems appropriate. The Student Q&amp;A forum is where I encourage you to post general questions about the class - and feel free to answer someone's question when you can!&lt;/p&gt;

&lt;h2&gt;Weekly Video-Check In&lt;/h2&gt;

&lt;p&gt;Every week, I'll record a brand new video for you where I briefly preview that week's module. I might also share a story, recommend an app, give props to a class member, or mention something about &lt;span style="color: #ff0000;"&gt;[YOUR COURSE TOPIC]&lt;/span&gt; I saw in the news.&lt;/p&gt;

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<ul>
<li><a href="https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-9540-4212724430"
target="_blank" rel="noopener">How do I view grades and instructor comments?</a></li>
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style="color: #ff0000;">[If you'll be using ZoomConference or some other video
conferencing software for office hours, let them know.] </span></p>
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<p><img style="float: left; padding-right: 15px;"
src="/courses/837/files/80054/download?wrap=1" alt="inbox" width="70" height="79"
data-api-endpoint="https://ccconlineed.instructure.com/api/v1/courses/837/files/80054"
data-api-returntype="File" />If I need to get a hold of you this semester, I'll contact you
through Canvas mail. You can access this feature by clicking "Inbox" in the left-hand
global navigation bar.</p>
<p>I respond to email within <strong><span style="color: #ff0000;">XX</span></strong>
hours, Monday through Friday. I reserve the right to wait until Monday to reply to
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